

**IN-SERVICE TEACHER PREPARATION TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE
EDUCATION IN GRADE R**

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that “**IN-SERVICE TEACHER PREPARATION TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN GRADE R**” is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



16 July 2019

N. FERREIRA

DATE

STUDENT NUMBER: 49047582

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Abraham and Mary Ferreira.

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I thank my Heavenly Father for His abiding presence in my life and for making it possible for me to complete this work.

“To God be the glory! Great things He hath done.”

I would also like to express my gratitude to:

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I love you.

ABSTRACT

The South African government has developed various policies to promote equality and inclusivity in education. Despite all the efforts, Grade R in-service teachers seem unable to cope with inclusive education and it appears that they are not adequately prepared for inclusive education. The purpose of this study is to explore Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa, with a view to add to existing knowledge on this topic and propose guidelines that can be used to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory formed the theoretical foundation for this study. Qualitative approach was used to understand Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. A sample group of eleven Grade R teachers were selected to provide "information-rich" data. Interviews, observations and document analysis were selected as data collection techniques. Data analysis and interpretation was a qualitative and inductive process. The findings revealed that Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes are inadequate to prepare them for inclusive education; and they have difficulty coping with inclusive education because of insufficient translation of theory into practice and insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources for inclusive education. Curriculum differentiation should form an important aspect of teacher training. It is recommended that there should be a consultative process between all stakeholders who are involved in training of Grade R teachers. Guidelines were also proposed that could be used to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. These include preparing Grade R in-service teachers to apply curriculum differentiation in practical situations, and using teacher trainers who are knowledgeable about inclusive education in the context of the Grade R classroom. The researcher proposes that Grade R teachers be prepared so they are skilled, knowledgeable and confident to transfer knowledge and skills among themselves, even in cluster meetings.

KEY TERMS

Grade R; Grade R teacher; in-service; teacher preparation; teacher preparation programmes; learner diversity; inclusive education; Grade R classroom

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BEd	Bachelor of Education
CHE	Council on Higher Education
DEd	Doctor of Education
DoE	Department of Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECDOE	Eastern Cape Department of Education
EFA	Education For All
FET	Further Education and Training
HDI	Human Development Index
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HEQF	Higher Education Qualifications Framework
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990
IPP	Inclusive Practice Projects
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Material
MEd	Master of Education
MEXT	Ministry of Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
MRTEQ	Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
NDP	National Development Plan 2030
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NPDE	National Professional Diploma in Education
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PGDE	Professional Graduate Diploma in Education
SAALED	South African Association of Learning and Education Differences
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SIAS	Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
TDA	Training and Development Agency
TSN	Teachers Trained in Special Needs
UK	United Kingdom

USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNISA	University of South Africa
WIL	Work Integrated Learning

LIST OF FIGURES

	PAGE
FIGURE 4.1 Characteristics of a qualitative study	78
FIGURE 4.2 Logistical measures of interviews	86

LIST OF TABLES

	PAGE
TABLE 5.1 Participant Profiles	105

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

DECLARATION.....	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
KEY TERMS.....	v
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
LIST OF TABLES	viii
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.....	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	3
1.2.1 Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education internationally and nationally	3
1.2.2 Theoretical framework	8
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT	9
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	10
1.5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	11
1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	11
1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....	12
1.7.1 Research approach	12
1.7.2 Research Design.....	12
1.7.3 Population and sampling	13
1.7.4 Data collection techniques.....	13
1.7.5 Data analysis and interpretation	14

1.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	16
1.8.1 Credibility.....	16
1.8.2 Transferability.....	16
1.8.3 Dependability.....	17
1.8.4 Confirmability.....	17
1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	17
1.10 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS	18
1.10.1 In-service.....	18
1.10.2 Teacher	19
1.10.3 Preparation.....	19
1.10.4 Inclusive education	19
1.10.5 Grade R.....	19
1.11 CHAPTER OUTLINE.....	19
 CHAPTER 2	 21
LITERATURE REVIEW: GRADE R IN-SERVICE TEACHER PREPARATION TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	 21
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	21
2.2 TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMMES THAT ARE CURRENTLY OFFERED TO PREPARE GRADE R IN-SERVICE TEACHERS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION..	 22
2.2.1 International context	23
2.2.1.1 Developed countries.....	25
2.2.1.2 Developing countries	30
2.2.2. South African context	33
2.2.3 Differences between South Africa and other countries.....	36
2.3 THE EXPERIENCES OF GRADE R TEACHERS WITH REGARD TO GRADE R TEACHER PREPARATION FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	 41

2.3.1 International context	41
2.3.1.1 Developed countries.....	42
2.3.1.2 Developing countries	44
2.3.2 South African context	46
2.3.3 Differences between South Africa and other countries.....	47
2.4 CURRENT TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMMES THAT PREPARE GRADE R TEACHERS TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	49
2.4.1 International context	49
2.4.1.1 Developed countries.....	49
2.4.1.2 Developing countries	51
2.4.2 South African context	53
2.4.3 Differences between South Africa and other countries.....	53
2.4.4 Models of Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education.....	54
2.5 SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT POLICIES THAT INFLUENCE GRADE R TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMMES FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	60
2.6 SUMMARY	63
 CHAPTER 3	 65
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	65
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	65
3.2 DEFINING THE TERM ‘THEORY’	65
3.3 MAJOR THEORIES THAT INFLUENCE RESEARCH IN EDUCATION	67
3.4 ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY	68
3.4.1 Introduction.....	69
3.4.1.1 Microsystem	69
3.4.1.2 Mesosystem	69
3.4.1.3 Exosystem.....	70
3.4.1.4 Macrosystem	71

3.4.1.5 Chronosystem	71
3.5 THE BIOECOLOGICAL MODEL	72
3.5.1 Person factors (e.g. the temperamental features of a person)	73
3.5.2 Process factors (e.g. the forms of interaction that take place in the microsystem)	74
3.5.3 Contexts (e.g. families, schools and local communities)	74
3.5.4 Time	74
3.6 SUMMARY	75
 CHAPTER 4	 76
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	76
4.1 INTRODUCTION	76
4.2 QUALITATIVE APPROACH	77
4.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM	79
4.3.1 The constructivist paradigm	79
4.3.2 Ontology	80
4.3.3 Epistemology	81
4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN	81
4.4.1 Phenomenology	82
4.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING	82
4.5.1 Population	82
4.5.2 Sampling	83
4.6 DATA COLLECTION	84
4.6.1 Interviews	84
4.6.2 Observation	86
4.6.3 Document analysis	87
4.7 DATA ANALYSIS	89
4.7.1 Planning for Recording of Data	89

4.7.2 Data Collection and Preliminary Analysis	90
4.7.3 Organizing Data	90
4.7.4 Reading and Writing Memos	90
4.7.5 Generating Categories, Themes and Patterns	91
4.7.6 Coding the data	91
4.7.7 Testing emergent understandings	92
4.7.8 Searching for alternative explanations.....	92
4.7.9 Writing the report.....	92
4.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	93
4.8.1 Credibility.....	93
4.8.2 Transferability.....	93
4.8.3 Dependability.....	94
4.8.4 Confirmability.....	94
4.9 ETHICS IN RESEARCH	95
4.9.1 Protection from harm.....	95
4.9.2 Permission.....	96
4.9.3 Voluntary participation	96
4.9.4 Informed consent.....	96
4.9.5 Confidentiality.....	97
4.9.6 Anonymity.....	97
4.9.7 Professional honesty	97
4.10 CONCLUSION	98
 CHAPTER 5	 99
DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	99
5.1 INTRODUCTION	99
5.2 QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY	100
5.2.1 Planning for Recording of Data	100

5.2.2 Data Collection and Preliminary Analysis	100
5.2.3 Organizing Data	101
5.2.4 Reading and Writing Memos	101
5.2.5 Generating Categories, Themes and Patterns	101
5.2.6 Coding the data	102
5.2.7 Testing emergent understandings	102
5.2.8 Searching for alternative expla	102
5.2.9 Writing the report.....	102
5.3 DATA ANALYSIS	103
5.4 PARTICIPANT PROFILES	104
5.5 PRESENTATIONS OF THE FINDINGS	109
5.6 INADEQUATE GRADE R IN-SERVICE TEACHER PREPARATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	110
5.6.1 Introduction.....	110
5.6.2 Interviews	110
5.6.3 Document analysis	111
5.6.3.1 Education White Paper 6.....	113
5.6.3.2 Universal Access to Grade R: Policy Framework	114
5.6.3.3 The Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications.....	115
5.6.3.4 Guidelines for Inclusive Learning programmes	117
5.6.3.5 Grade R Resource Kit 2015	118
5.6.4 Concluding remarks about inadequate Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.....	119
5.7 INSUFFICIENT TRANSLATION OF THEORY INTO PRACTICE	120
5.7.1 Introduction.....	120
5.7.2 Literature review	120
5.7.3 Data from the interviews.....	121

5.7.4 Document analysis	126
5.7.5 Observation	127
5.7.6 Concluding remarks about insufficient translation of theory into practice	128
5.8 INSUFFICIENT KNOWLEDGE ON THE USE OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES	129
5.8.1 Interviews	129
5.8.2 Observations	130
5.8.3 Concluding remarks about insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources.....	134
5.9 INFUSION OF CURRICULUM DIFFERENTIATION IN GRADE	135
5.9.1 Introduction.....	135
5.9.2 Observations	137
5.9.3 Document analysis	137
5.10 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS	139
5.11 CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	140
CHAPTER 6	142
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY	142
6.1 INTRODUCTION.....	142
6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	142
6.2.1 Inadequate Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education .	142
6.2.2 Insufficient translation of theory into practice.....	143
6.2.3 Insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources.....	144
6.2.4 Infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education.....	144
6.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS	145
6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS	148
6.4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION.....	149

6.4.1.1 Inadequate Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education	149
6.4.1.2 Insufficient translation of theory into practice	150
6.4.1.3 Insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources	151
6.4.1.4 Infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education	152
6.4.1.5 Proposed guidelines to enhance in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R	153
6.4.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	158
6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	159
6.6 CONCLUSIONS	159
REFERENCES	162
APPENDIX A ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	181
APPENDIX B PERMISSION LETTER FOR THE PROVINCE	183
APPENDIX C PERMISSION LETTER FROM THE PROVINCE	185
APPENDIX D PERMISSION LETTER FOR THE DISTRICT	187
APPENDIX E PERMISSION LETTER FOR THE SCHOOL	189
APPENDIX F PERMISSION LETTERS FOR THE TEACHERS	191
APPENDIX G INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	194
APPENDIX H TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS	196
APPENDIX I OBSERVATION SCHEDULE	206
APPENDIX J TRANSCRIBED OBSERVATIONS	208
APPENDIX K DOCUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE	214
APPENDIX L TRANSCRIBED DOCUMENT ANALYSIS	215
APPENDIX M CODES	221
APPENDIX N TURNITIN REPORT	223
APPENDIX O LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE	224
APPENDIX P FORMATTING CERTIFICATE	234

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In-service teacher preparation for Inclusive Education in Grade R (reception year) remains a concern across the education sector. This study focuses on Grade R teachers, because they play an important part in inclusive education programmes: they are the first contact learners have with formal learning structures; they provide the foundation for lifelong learning; they determine the type of follow-up support learners will receive in the grades after Grade R (Department of Education White Paper No. 5 2001:7).

South African policies on education show that South Africa is in line with international developments in terms of inclusivity, for example the South African Constitution states that the rights of all citizens are important and should be respected (Republic of South Africa 1996: 7-36). Educational rights are addressed in Chapter 2 of the Constitution (Republic of South Africa 1996): section 29 states that all citizens have the right to basic education; section 9 states that there should be no discrimination against people on the grounds of disability; and section 29 further states that it is government's responsibility to ensure that all citizens have "effective" access to education. There appear to be challenges in the implementation of these policies though, because Grade R teachers generally appear unable to cope with inclusive education. The National Development Plan 2030 (NDP) identifies Grade R teacher preparation as an area of concern and states that more investment should be made towards the training of Grade R teachers: "Teachers certified as qualified increased from 54 percent in 1990 to 94 percent, but outcomes have remained poor. South Africa needs to improve the quality of teacher training, and recruit higher caliber candidates. *The Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011–2025* provides a useful framework. It needs to be strengthened and there should be incentives to ensure it is implemented effectively" (Department of The Presidency. 2012:306). The Department of Basic Education conducted a national survey in 2015 and found that there were 12,336

Grade R teachers in need of training and qualification upgrading (DoE 2015 (d)). Based on the researcher's own experiences as a teacher and through his interaction with colleagues, he also observed that Grade R teachers generally appear unable to cope with inclusive education; it also appears that Grade R teachers are generally not adequately prepared for inclusive education.

The above information on teacher preparation points to a need for more research in Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. To this end, the current study sets out to explore Grade R in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in South Africa, with a view to adding to existing knowledge on this topic and developing guidelines and a model to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. A further objective of the study is to explore ways to improve the situation and conditions for Grade R teachers by developing guidelines and a model to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.

Well-designed Grade R teacher preparation programmes are needed for in-service Grade R teachers to fulfil their duties effectively (Forlin 2010a:10). Various influencing factors should be considered though: "Teaching in inclusive schools is complex and multilayered. It requires teachers to be able to address cultural issues (attitudes, values & beliefs) and systemic factors (time, resources & support). In addition to having sufficient discipline knowledge it requires them to make suitable accommodations, modify curricula to meet the multiple needs of diverse learners and utilize different pedagogies to enable effective learning outcomes for all students" (Forlin 2010a:10). Oswald (2007:155) states that teachers should be trained as inclusive professionals who can act as efficient agents of change. Booyse and du Plessis (2008:36) add that a teacher is a subject specialist, and should have knowledge, skills, values, principles, methods and procedures relevant to the field, and know about different approaches to teaching and learning and how these may be used in ways that are suitable to the needs of learners. Swart and Pettipher (2011:20) further add that professional development should prepare teachers for collaboration and support, and assist them in understanding their relative roles and responsibilities in the inclusive school environment. The implementation of inclusive education is complicated by negative or undecided beliefs and feelings that teachers

generally appear to hold towards inclusive education (De Boer, Pijl & Minnaert 2011:348). Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education is further explored in the following preliminary literature review.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.2.1 Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education internationally and nationally

The first section of the preliminary literature review offers brief insight into Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education on an international level. This helps one to understand the context of Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa. South African government policies that influence Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education are also explored. The following section integrates this study into a theoretical framework. The preliminary literature review attempts to provide some insights and answers to the research questions of this study.

The preliminary literature review shows that each country in the world is unique and has unique educational experiences. Many educational organizations and departments face challenges globally, and researchers are conducting studies globally to address these challenges. One cannot conduct a research study on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education without considering the global phenomenon; and this research study draws from global practices to make sense of Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa.

Education systems all over the world have embraced inclusive education or are in the process of transforming their education systems for inclusion (Forlin and Nguyet 2010:34). A lot of attention is now on teacher preparation so teachers can take on their new roles as inclusive practitioners; and teacher training institutions all over the world have modified their courses to ensure that teachers are prepared to meet the challenges of inclusive classrooms (Forlin and Nguyet 2010:52). Forlin (2010a:3) states that teacher preparation should keep up with societal and political changes. This is difficult though, because it means that universities and colleges should

continually reflect on their teacher preparation programmes and continually reframe their programmes to keep up with societal and political changes (Forlin 2010a:9).

Forlin (2010b:246) suggests that teacher education should have a value-based approach that seeks to develop positive teacher attitudes towards diversity and inclusion. Rouse (2010:48) studied the experiences of newly qualified teachers and found that inclusive education was difficult to implement all over the world. He states that teachers generally have a negative mindset and they find it difficult to accept their responsibility as providers of inclusive education (Rouse 2010:520). He stresses that teachers are likely to embrace this responsibility if they have assurance of help, advice and support to develop their inclusive practices (Rouse 2010:52). de Boer, Pijl and Minnaert (2011:331) see teachers as “key persons” in the implementation of inclusive education. They reviewed twenty-six global studies on primary school-teacher attitudes to inclusive education, and found that the majority of teachers are either negative or neutral about the inclusion of learners who experience barriers to learning in mainstream schools (de Boer et al 2011:348). More research could prove valuable in determining the ways in which teachers’ attitudes influence the implementation of inclusive education.

Florian and Linklater (2010:370) conducted a study of an initial teacher development course offered at a Scottish university, to determine the extent to which teachers were able to apply their existing knowledge in inclusive classrooms. They found that the initial teacher development course was necessary and important to develop effective inclusive teachers (Florian and Linklater 2010:285). Forlin (2010b:252) emphasises the need for teacher education to be continuous, and states that teachers need support and skills development throughout their careers. Research in in-service teacher preparation programmes could reveal whether Grade R in-service teachers are receiving suitable support and skills development.

In South Africa, Lemmer and van Wyk (2010:247) state that teacher training was strongly dictated by apartheid government policies before 1994. The post-1994 South African government developed education policies to build a fair and equal education system: “Policy initiatives have also realigned teacher education with new social goals for a transformed society” (Lemmer and van Wyk 2010:248). We have

a long way to go to a transformed society, because the present education system is still unequal and fragmented (Lemmer and van Wyk 2010:261). It appears that current teacher preparation programmes are driven by noble political ideologies, but one needs to locate the voice of the teacher by asking what the teacher is experiencing and what influence the teacher has in policy decisions and the development of teacher preparation programmes.

A study of post-1994 government policies shows that the South African government promotes equality and inclusivity in education (Drake 2014:202). The development of these policies was influenced by political changes in South Africa, and reflect the ideals and values of the new South Africa (Proudlock 2014:1). The new Constitution of South Africa places strong emphasis on the rights of all people, including those with disabilities (Republic of South Africa 1996a:7-39). Donohue and Bornman (2014:11) describe the inclusion of learners with disabilities or barriers to learning as a “human rights issue”. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 was established to promote the ideals of the Constitution (Department of Education 1996). Government developed Education White Paper No. 5 in 2001 to improve access to Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes, including Grade R programmes, and to improve the quality of these programmes (Department of Education White Paper No. 5 2001:5). Education White Paper No. 6 was developed in 2001 to provide inclusive educational services to children with barriers to learning and focused especially on children of school age (Department of Education White Paper No. 6 2001:5). Government also developed guidelines to prepare teachers to meet the educational demands of the new, democratic South Africa (Department of Education 2006:4). There were, however, difficulties in the implementation of all these policies, and in 2012 the Department of Basic Education reported that children with barriers to learning still had limited access to basic education (Department of Basic Education 2012:1).

Phasha, Mahlo and Maseko (2013:89) state that inclusion is relatively new in South Africa. For this reason, most Grade R teachers feel frustrated and they feel inadequately trained as inclusive practitioners. They need “reorientation, support and assistance, as well as fundamental shift in their mindsets and attitudes” to implement inclusive education.

Drake (2014:210) found that South African teachers are generally unable to implement inclusive education policies in inclusive classrooms. She refers to this as “the policy-practice gap”, and states that this leads to stress and frustration among teachers (Drake 2014:210). She believes that inclusive education policies could be successfully implemented in South Africa if teachers “model the collaborative and participatory values that founded the policies” (Drake 2014:211). Phasha (2010:176) identifies the teacher as the most important “driver” in the implementation of inclusive education. Despite this, teacher preparation programmes fail to prepare teachers to cope with their roles and responsibilities as inclusive practitioners (Phasha 2010:176). She found that limited resources, overcrowded classes, and lack of support from stakeholders and educational structures are also factors that contribute to this problem (Phasha 2010:176). These findings confirm that research is needed in teacher preparation programmes; and, secondly, research should determine how the above factors relate to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education.

Swart and Pettipher (2011:9) point out that South African society is one of social and political diversity. They are positive about the future of education and identify six elements of educational change that could help to implement inclusive education in South Africa. These are: a shared vision by all stakeholders or role players; whole-school development for all members of the school community and organisation; support to all members of the school community and collaboration between them; positive attitudes about diversity, change, collaboration and learning; use of existing resources to support and sustain inclusive education; professional development and support for teachers. These six elements are taken into consideration by stakeholders, like universities, when they develop Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education.

Landsberg (2011:67) emphasises that teachers should be trained to be “dynamic, competent and innovative”, so they could accommodate learners with diverse learning styles. There is also generally a lack of continued teacher-support from school-based support teams and district-based support teams (Landsberg 2011:77). This study will explore ways to enhance this system of support for Grade R teachers in inclusive classrooms.

Tchatchoueng (2014:221) provides practical methods that could be used by Grade R teachers to build inclusive classrooms, for example co-operative learning, scaffolding, cubing, problem solving and collaborative co-teaching. He identifies inadequate teacher preparation as a challenge that hampers the successful implementation of inclusive education (Tchatchoueng 2014:237). He suggests a model of staff development that is “school based and context focused” as a possible solution to these challenges.

Mampe (2014: 250, 257) points out that an inclusive teacher should have an understanding of the different barriers to learning, and be aware of the influence of context on learner development. He concludes by describing strategies that the Grade R teacher could use in the inclusive classroom (Mampe 2014:253). His strategies are similar to the recommendations made by Tchatchoueng (2014:221). These ideas are innovative and will be revisited later in this study to explore new strategies to enhance teacher preparation programmes to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa.

Despite all the challenges in the provision of inclusive education, the policy documents of the last few years reflect government’s ongoing commitment to provide inclusive education for all children. The Education For All (EFA) Country Progress Report: South Africa speaks of government’s commitment to the achievement of the Education For All (EFA) goals that were adopted by government at the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000 (Department of Basic Education 2013:8). The Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) is further evidence of government’s efforts to provide inclusive education (Department of Basic Education 2014:1). This policy supports teachers by providing a framework for the standardisation of the procedures to identify, assess and provide programmes for learners who experience barriers to learning. Despite all the developments, South Africa still has a long way to go to provide quality inclusive education (Drake 2014:196). The present study attempts to understand how government policies and legislation influence inclusive education practices, specifically Grade R teacher preparation. This could help to identify policy gaps; and findings could be used to make recommendations to improve the situation.

In summary, the preliminary literature review shows that challenges exist with current teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. More research is needed to obtain Grade R in-service teachers' experiences with teacher preparation programmes. Their "voice" is valuable in this study that seeks to contribute to existing knowledge in the area, as well as improving the situation and conditions for Grade R in-service teachers.

1.2.2 Theoretical framework

'Theory' can be defined as "a conceptual framework or system of ideas that explains, but goes beyond, facts" (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana 2010: 60). Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework theory was found suitable for this study on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. According to this theory, the Grade R teacher is in a good position to consider the developmental levels of the learners and the contextual influences on the learners' development (Bouwer 2011:50). Alant and Harty (2011:82) also refer to Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological theory in their discussion on early childhood intervention, and emphasise the importance of the interaction between the three "environmental resources" of the child: family, community and classroom. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory also states that child development happens in five systems or structures (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998):

- i Microsystem
- ii Mesosystem
- iii Exosystem
- iv Macrosystem
- v Chronosystem

When applied to the present study, the exosystem could be seen as the system where Grade R teacher preparation takes place. The macrosystem could be the system where government functions in terms of policies and legislations. Davin, van Staden & Janse van Rensburg (2013:33) also use Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model to explain the development of the child. According to this model, the following contextual factors influence a child's development: Person factors (such as parents); Process factors (such as interactions within a system); Context (such as family); and

Time (change to maturation or changes in the environment). In the context of this study, the person factors are the Grade R teachers and the process factors are seen as the Grade R teacher preparation programmes to which Grade R teachers are exposed, and which influence their ability to cope as inclusive practitioners.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological and bio-ecological theories are appropriate for this present study because it gives insight into the various contextual influences on learning. It also places emphasis on the interaction between the various components that make up the education system, i.e. between different role players, especially teachers and teacher preparation institutions, and government. In this study, the education system includes the following role players or components:

1. The Grade R teacher whose ability to perform his/her duties as inclusive practitioner is determined by the effectiveness of the Grade R teacher preparation programme they followed;
2. The Grade R learner whose learning and development is influenced by the effectiveness of the teacher preparation programme that their Grade R teacher followed;
3. Institutions that design and offer teacher preparation programmes to prepare Grade R teachers for inclusive classrooms;
4. Governmental departments responsible for making policy decisions that guide institutions in the design of Grade R teacher preparation programmes.
5. UNESCO, where global planning and decision-making take place that influence governmental policies on teacher preparation.

Systems theory is ideal for this study on Grade R teacher preparation because it explores the experiences and perspectives of all these role players on the different hierarchical levels, thereby enabling us to see the totality of the phenomenon.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since 1994 the South African government has developed various policies promoting equality and inclusivity in education (Department of Basic Education 2013:8). Much investment has also been made in teacher support and development to promote equal and inclusive education (Department of Basic Education 2014:1). But, despite

all the positives, the preliminary literature review also showed that Grade R teachers are generally unable to cope with inclusive education, and it appears that Grade R teachers are generally not adequately prepared for inclusive education. This means that there is still a lack of equality and inclusivity in South African education. Existing literature points to a need for more research on this topic.

This present study aims to explore in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R, and based on the findings of the study, the researcher plans to add to existing knowledge on this topic, and develop guidelines for Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. Recommendations will also be given to improve the situation and conditions for Grade R teachers in inclusive classrooms. Improving the situation and conditions for Grade R teachers would lead to improvement in education, because education could become more equal and inclusive for all Grade R learners, including those with diverse learning needs. This would help to address social injustice and human rights issues.

1.4 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is guided by the following main research question:

How can Grade R in-service teachers be prepared to implement inclusive education?

The following sub-questions are relevant to the study:

1. What teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa?
2. What are the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa?
3. How do current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South African classrooms?
4. How could teacher preparation programmes be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education?

1.5 THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to explore Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa. The objectives are:

1. To explore what teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa.
2. To find out the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa.
3. To investigate how current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South Africa.
4. To explore how teacher preparation programmes could be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Inclusive education is relatively new in South Africa, and this study could generate data to fill knowledge gaps on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa, and develop guidelines for Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The findings could add to the literature available in this area, and be a source of information for future researchers, and be used to propose guidelines to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The methodology could influence future researchers in their selection of methodology; for example, when they set out to replicate the findings of this study. This study could also provide insight into systems theory as a model to explore and understand Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa.

The research findings would be made available and could be significant and beneficial for different stakeholders, including:

- Grade R teachers could benefit from the opportunity to share their views and challenges, to enhance Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education, thereby improving their situation and work conditions.
- Teacher training institutions could benefit by reflecting on their teacher

preparation programmes, and identify possible areas of improvement, leading to the enhancement of Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education.

- Government departments could benefit by reflecting on their teacher preparation policies, and identify possible areas of improvement to enhance Grade R teacher preparation for inclusion.
- Ultimately, Grade R learners, especially learners with disabilities, could benefit from all the positive developments in their support systems.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The methodology section of a research study gives the “design of the study” and can include aspects such as data collection and analysis methods selected by the researcher (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 38).

1.7.1 Research approach

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 20), researchers can adopt quantitative, qualitative, mixed method, and analytic approaches in their research, with the first two being the most common. The qualitative approach will be adopted for this study.

1.7.2 Research Design

A phenomenological study is conducted to describe and interpret participant perspectives of an event or phenomenon (Fouché and Schurink 2013: 316; McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 346). Data are collected by “naturally occurring interactions” or “unsolicited documents” (Fouché and Schurink 2013: 317).

The phenomenological design was selected for this study. The researcher seeks engage with the Grade R teachers as data collector, and describe and interpret their experiences of Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes. The researcher wants to describe, understand and interpret the meanings that Grade R teachers attach to experiences with Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education (Bloor and Wood 2006: 128). He wants to describe, understand

and interpret Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education, as seen through the eyes of Grade R in-service teachers (Brink, van der Walt, van Rensburg 2012: 122). This design helps to achieve the aims of the study and answer the main research question: How can Grade R in-service teachers be prepared to implement inclusive education?

1.7.3 Population and sampling

‘Population’ is a group of people, objects, or events to which the results of the research can be generalised (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 128). The population of this study consist of schools offering instruction to Grade R learners in the Eastern Cape, where the researcher is a teacher. Purposive sampling is used to identify schools from different socio-economic backgrounds to obtain sufficient data to represent the population of the study and address the research problem. In purposive sampling the researcher selects the people best able to provide the information to achieve the objectives of his or her study (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 138; Kumar 1999: 162). The sample group consists of 11 Grade R in-service teachers able to provide sufficient data to answer the research questions. The Grade R teachers were approached via their school principals. The researcher obtained permission from the head office of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDOE) to conduct the study, and informed the district office in Grahamstown of the schools that were part of the study. The research was conducted in the Grahamstown district.

1.7.4 Data collection techniques

Qualitative data collection techniques were used to get a better understanding of how Grade R in-service teachers are prepared for inclusive education. Interviewing, observation and document analysis were used to collect data, with interviewing as the central method. This multi-method approach to data collection allows for data collection from both primary and secondary sources, and for triangulation and cross-validation of data (Kumar 1999: 123).

One-on-one interviews were conducted with Grade R in-service teachers to obtain their views on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. The interview guide was used, and questions were prepared in advance so the interviews could have a guided, yet natural format. Interviews were conducted in natural environments where informants were comfortable and at ease, i.e. their classrooms and staffrooms (Greeff 2010: 296). An interview schedule was used to obtain relevant data to answer the research questions. Interviews were kept short, around forty minutes, to ensure that informants did not become tired or bored. Follow-up interviews were scheduled to obtain sufficient data. Observations were also conducted in Grade R classes to corroborate data obtained through interviews and document analysis.

The Grade R classes were ideal, natural settings that enabled the researcher to observe real life scenarios (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 209). The researcher was present as a passive observer and wrote notes in an unobtrusive manner (Kumar 1999: 105). Document analysis was used in this study to explore various policies and guidelines on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. The researcher sought to explore the influence the policies and guidelines have on Grade R teacher preparation.

1.7.5 Data analysis and interpretation

Thematic data analysis was used to identify the themes in the data. This was a qualitative analysis, where the researcher followed an inductive process to organise data into categories, and then identify patterns and relationships among the categories (de Vos 2010: 334; MacMillan and Schumacher 2010: 367). This study followed the process of qualitative data analysis recommended by Schurink, Fouché & de Vos (2013: 403-418):

(i) Organizing data

This was done away from the research site (Schurink et al 2013: 408). After the interviews, observations and document analysis were conducted in the field, data were arranged according to the names of the informants in electronic format using Microsoft Word. A backup copy was stored for safekeeping, and a working copy

was used for analysis.

(ii) Reading and writing memos

The data were read many times to get a sense of the whole and to break the data into relevant parts (Schurink et al 2013: 409). This process was followed to explore answers for the research questions. Memo writing was used to identify relevant data during this sifting process. Memo writing also gave the researcher opportunity to reflect on the suitability of the data to answer the research questions.

(iii) Generating categories and coding the data

Open coding was used to identify categories, themes and patterns in the data. During open coding data were broken down into parts, examined and compared to find similarities and differences (Schurink et al 2013: 412). The data were compared to identify duplication and overlapping, and similar codes were grouped together using similar colour coding. The same number system of the sub-questions was used to identify the themes in the data.

(iv) Testing emergent understandings

The data were searched to find contradictions and negative instances of the themes and patterns that had been identified (Schurink et al 2013: 415). The purpose was to determine how useful the data were to answer the research questions.

(v) Searching for alternative explanations

The researcher searched the data for other, plausible explanations for the themes and patterns in the data. He engaged with the data critically to ensure that he did not exclude or ignore data for any reason, for example based on his own preconceived notions or biases (Schurink et al 2013: 416). This was done to explain the plausibility of his explanations of the phenomenon that was explored (Schurink et al 2013: 416).

(vi) Presenting the data

Participant responses and comments were quoted *verbatim* to give credibility to the report (Schurink et al 2013: 418). The report includes quotes from the interviews, the observations, and the document analysis. The data are presented in tabular form,

and appendices are included. Appendices include letters of communication, consent forms, the interview guide, the interview schedule, and other documents.

1.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The trustworthiness of a qualitative study can be measured by the credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability of the study (Schurink et al. 2013: 419; Guba and Lincoln 1994).

The following measures were in place to ensure trustworthiness of this study:

1.8.1 Credibility

Credibility is an indicator that a study was conducted in a way that ensures that “the subject has been accurately identified and described” (Schurink et al. 2013: 420). Various measures were put in place to increase the credibility of this study, including purposive sampling where the researcher selected Grade R teachers from different schools representing different socio-economic backgrounds to reflect the diversity of the population and obtain relevant data to answer the research questions. The researcher also used credible data collection methods to ensure the findings were truthful, and he conducted prolonged and persistent data collection to ensure that sufficient data were collected in the field.

1.8.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of one study can be transferred from one situation or case to another (Schurink et al. 2013: 420; Guba and Lincoln 2001: 6). Measures have been put in place to increase the transferability of this study on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education, so policy makers and researchers can decide to what extent this study may be useful for their own situations or cases. These measures include the use of multiple data sources, i.e. document analysis, interviewing and observation, which made it possible for the researcher to corroborate the data. The researcher also used accounts of field experiences during data collection with Grade R teachers to make the study useful for other situations or cases (Schurink et al. 2013: 420).

1.8.3 Dependability

Dependability indicates whether a study is “logical, well-documented and audited” (Schurink et al. 2013: 420). This research report is subject to examination by external examiners who “audit” the study, and examine various aspects, including the methodology used by the researcher, and the reasons for using it (Schurink et al. 2013: 421). The researcher also checked the dependability of the findings by verifying the interview data with the participants during and after data collection.

1.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which the findings of the study can be confirmed by somebody other than the researcher (Schurink et al. 2013: 421). The study is “audited” by examiners to determine whether the researcher provided sufficient evidence to corroborate the findings of the study (Schurink et al. 2013: 421). The researcher used three data collection methods to collect credible data that could be used as evidence to corroborate the findings. He also made every effort to remain objective and unbiased during the study, for example by keeping a separate field journal where he recorded his personal views, so that his personal views would not interfere with the data collected from participants. Journal writing also gave the researcher opportunity to reflect on the research process and progress. Through reflection and self-reflection, he was able to gauge if he was meeting the aims of the study and answering the research questions.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 338) state that qualitative research could be personally intrusive, and should, therefore, follow guidelines to adhere to research ethics. This study was conducted according to the rules and ethical requirements of the University of South Africa (UNISA), and was guided by the following ethical principles:

Protection from harm: The researcher ensured that the study did not bring any physical or emotional harm to any of the participants. The rights of the participants

were respected, and their interests were protected. The researcher endeavoured to protect participants from harm by maintaining confidentiality and anonymity. The research report was released to the participants on completion of the study to confirm that ethical principles had been adhered to.

Permission: Permission was sought from the research ethics committee of UNISA to conduct the study. The researcher then contacted the authorities of the Eastern Cape Department of Education to obtain permission to conduct the research study in the province and in the district, and to provide the names of schools that were part of the study. Written permissions were obtained from the Grade R teachers to partake in the study.

Informed consent: Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Written consent was obtained from the authorities and participating Grade R teachers to collect data through interviews, observations, and document analysis.

Confidentiality: The data collected from Grade R teachers were treated with the strictest confidence. Participation was voluntary, and no information was shared without the consent of the participants.

Anonymity: The schools and the participants are anonymous. Their names were replaced with letters of the alphabet and numbers, e.g. School A, Teacher 1.

Professional honesty: This study was conducted in a professional and honest manner. No data were fabricated, and the findings were reported in a truthful manner. The researcher also acknowledged all sources of information, i.e. by quoting the ideas or words of other researchers or organisations.

1.10 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The following concepts are relevant to the study:

1.10.1 In-service

For the purpose of this study, “in-service” refers to the “preparation” that Grade R

teachers receive while they are fully employed.

1.10.2 Teacher

This study uses the definition of a teacher as found in the South African Schools Act (Department of Education 1996: 1): A person who teaches, educates or trains other persons at a school.

1.10.3 Preparation

In the context of this study, “preparation” refers to the programmes that are underpinned by the South African government and offered by tertiary institutions to prepare Grade R teachers for their role as Grade R teachers in inclusive education.

1.10.4 Inclusive education

There has been a gradual development and a broader understanding of inclusive education globally, and inclusive education now encompasses all learners and focuses on the policies that exclude vulnerable learners from education (UNESCO 2018: 4). Inclusive education can also be defined as is the integration of all learners, including those with severe disabilities, into regular education systems (Woolfolk 2010: 557). For this study, “inclusive education” refers to education that includes all learners.

1.10.5 Grade R

In this study Grade R refers to the year before Grade One. Grade R is also referred to as the Reception Year.

1.11 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The thesis has the following basic outline:

Chapter One: Introduced the study and outlined the problem statement, research questions, aims and objectives.

Chapter Two: Presents literature pertaining to the study on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education.

Chapter Three: Explains the theoretical framework that underpins this study.

Chapter Four: Outlines the research methodology.

Chapter Five: Presents the results and discussion.

Chapter Six: Presents the summary of findings, conclusions and implications of the study.

This study sets out to explore in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R.

Chapter one serves as an introductory chapter to the thesis and provides a brief overview of various aspects of the study. The preliminary literature review offers an overview of the state of in-service teacher preparation globally and in South Africa. An overview is then given of South African legislation and policies influencing Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. An overview is then given of the theoretical framework of the study, including the problem statement, research questions, aims, objectives and significance of the study, research design and methodology, trustworthiness in qualitative research, ethical considerations, key concepts, and the chapter outline.

Chapter two provides a literature review of Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The focus is on international and national perspectives of this phenomenon. The chapter explores South African legislation and policies influencing Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. Lastly, it provides an overview of models of teacher preparation that are relevant to this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: GRADE R IN-SERVICE TEACHER PREPARATION TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a literature review of Grade R in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education. The first three sections provide overviews of Grade R teacher preparation on an international level and then on a national level. This approach helps to understand the bigger, international context of Grade R in-service teacher preparation, before shifting the focus to Grade R in-service teacher preparation in South Africa, which helps one to gradually understand the context of Grade R teacher preparation in South Africa. The three sections also provide overviews of the national and international differences between Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The government policies influencing Grade R teacher preparation in South Africa are explored in section 2.5. The literature review seeks to present insights aimed at answering the research questions given in chapter one. To this effect, section 2.6 of chapter two explores models of Grade R teacher preparation that are relevant to this study. The chapter ends with a summary of the main points raised in the chapter.

GRADE R IN-SERVICE TEACHER PREPARATION TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

It is important to note that few studies are focused on Grade R in-service teacher preparation, and even fewer on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education (Walton and Lloyd 2012: 64). Selection of countries for the literature review was partly influenced by the availability of data; certain countries could not be included in the literature review because data were limited or unavailable for those countries. And due to the limited data on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education, this study is mostly informed by data pertaining to general teacher preparation. This could be problematic, because a one-size-fits-all approach would not be effective to train teachers, when one considers that teaching and learning take

place in different environments that are characterised by learner diversity and diversity of learning needs. On a more optimistic note, if researchers do not refer to specific grades in their research, one can assume that their findings can be generalised to include Grade R teachers.

2.2 WHAT TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMMES ARE CURRENTLY OFFERED TO PREPARE GRADE R IN-SERVICE TEACHERS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

The term “teacher preparation” in this context refers to teacher preparation programmes offered by tertiary institutions to equip Grade R teachers for their role as inclusive practitioners. Teacher preparation generally differs from country to country because of various factors, including cultural differences, political differences and policy differences (Savolainen, Engelbrecht, Nel & Malinen 2012: 52). Differences should not matter, though, because the term “inclusive” suggests that the focus should be on similarities and inclusivity rather than on differences and separateness (Savolainen et al. 2012: 52).

Education is ever-changing, and stakeholders strive to develop education systems to keep up with changes in society and the demands of society. Challenges in education continue to change and increase in intensity as well. Teacher training should continue to change as well, so teachers are able to keep up with the changes in education. For this reason, teacher preparation models need to change continuously. Different models of teacher preparation exist, and each model has its value and purpose in the unique learning environment for which it was designed. The two prevailing models of teacher preparation for inclusion are the additional model and the infusion model. Within the additional model, additional or separate units are added to teacher training programmes to prepare teachers for inclusive classrooms. This model has benefits, for example students are able to choose units that can improve their skills or confidence as inclusive practitioners. This model is, however, not always effective for the following reasons:

1. The units are often optional, and students may choose not to include them in their training programme.
2. The units are often limited in time.

A major criticism of this model is that it reinforces the notion that inclusive education is separate from mainstream education. A second criticism is that it reinforces the notion that inclusive education requires special skills and expertise, and these skills and expertise only need to be acquired by those who will employed teach learners with special learning needs.

Within the infusion model, inclusive education is included in all training for all teachers. This model could be successful if teacher training institutions design courses that are relevant and meaningful for inclusive practitioners:

1. It could create awareness of inclusive education in all student teachers.
2. Student teachers would be able to acquire skills and expertise that they could apply with confidence as inclusive practitioners.

2.2.1 International context

South Africa strives to keep up with international developments in education (UNESCO 2014). It makes sense then that a study on Grade R teacher preparation in South Africa should include insight into teacher preparation on a global level. South African delegates were amongst more than 250 delegates from different countries that attended the Global Meeting on Education for All that was held in Muscat, Oman, in May 2014, and adopted the Muscat Agreement (UNESCO 2014). The Muscat Agreement indicates that the global trend is towards Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education (UNESCO 2014). This Agreement aims to make equal and inclusive education available for all people by 2030 and outlines 7 targets for global education beyond 2015 (UNESCO 2014). Target 6 is especially relevant, because it places importance on teacher preparation, and states that governments should ensure that, by 2030, all learners will be taught by qualified, professionally trained, motivated and well-supported teachers (UNESCO 2014). South Africa was one of the countries that committed to attaining these targets.

When the decision was made to explore Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education on an international level, the researcher had to decide which countries would be included in the literature review. Although more than 250 delegates from countries all over the world adopted the Muscat Agreement, it would be too great a

task to explore Grade R teacher preparation in all those countries (UNESCO 2014). Literature shows that differences exist in the education services of developed and developing countries, for example children with disabilities in developing countries are often excluded from educational services, while disabled children in developed countries generally receive inclusive educational services (Srivastava, de Boer & Pijl 2015: 179). Despite the differences, Walton (2015: 176) reports that developing and developed countries often share similar challenges in the provision of inclusive education, as well as in teacher preparation for inclusive education. Based on this perspective, the literature review that follows seek to provide insights into Grade R teacher preparation in developed as well as developing countries.

Countries can be grouped according to the Human Development Index (HDI) as given by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 2011). The HDI ranks countries into four categories based on education, health and living standards: very high human development; high human development; medium human development and low human development (UNDP 2011). These concepts point out the discrimination between countries based on cultural differences and their different engagement with colonisation. It has become the tendency now to use the concepts “higher income countries” and “lower income countries” (Muthukrishna and Engelbrecht 2018: 1). For this study, countries of very high human development and high human development will be referred to as developed countries; and countries of medium human development and low human development will be referred to as developing countries. The Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines “developed” as “having a relatively high level of industrialization and standard of living” (Merriam-Webster 2016). “Developing” is defined as “having few industries and many poor people who are unable to buy the things they need” (Merriam-Webster 2016). South Africa is classified as a developing country (Srivastava et al 2015: 184). Based on these definitions, one would assume that developed countries have well developed education systems that provide high standards of education. One would also assume that their Grade R teacher preparation programmes are in line with the inclusive policies that have been developed by the UN (UNESCO 2014). On the other hand, one would assume that the education systems of developing countries are not as advanced or well developed as that of developed countries, and the Grade R teacher preparation programmes of developing countries have shortcomings when

compared with those of developed countries. The following sections will show how factual these assumptions are.

2.2.1.1 Developed countries

Based on the explanations given in section 2.2, the following developed countries were selected for the literature review: Australia, United Kingdom, Scotland, United States of America, Canada, Singapore and Japan.

Australia

Australia has embraced inclusive education and increased the numbers of learners with disabilities in general education classes (Forlin and Chambers 2011: 17). Grade R teacher preparation in Western Australia is guided by a Competency Framework for Teachers (Department of Education and Training 2004; Forlin and Chambers 2011: 17). This framework promotes inclusive education and states that teacher preparation programmes should ensure that teachers have the “skills, knowledge and understandings” that are needed to render quality teaching (Department of Education and Training 2004: 2). It further states that teacher preparation programmes should produce inclusive practitioners who can identify and address the “educational, physical, emotional, social and cultural needs” of learners (Department of Education and Training 2004: 6). Various relevant stakeholders were consulted in the development of this framework to ensure its credibility (Department of Education and Training 2004: 2). These stakeholders include teachers, representatives from professional associations and representatives from tertiary institutions (Department of Education and Training 2004: 2). Sharma, Forlin, Loreman & Earle (2006: 80) state that inclusive education can be successful if all the stakeholders are committed. They identified that tertiary institutions are pivotal in ensuring that teachers are adequately prepared to implement inclusive education (Sharma et al 2006: 80). Most Australian jurisdictions allow training institutions to design their own primary education programmes (Varcoe and Boyle 2013: 326). The result of this decision is that many Australian universities have not yet included special education in primary education programmes (Varcoe and Boyle 2013: 326). Varcoe and Boyle (2013: 335) also found that primary education programmes generally lack support for pre-service

teachers during their student placements. The government established a Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group in 2014 to provide guidance on teacher preparation courses, so teachers could acquire practical skills to cope with the challenges of inclusive classrooms (Department of Education and Training 2015). They released a report which included thirty-eight recommendations on teacher preparation in 2015 (Department of Education and Training 2015). Recommendations 9 to 25 and recommendations 28, 35 and 38 are directed at higher education providers and place emphasis on the important role of higher education providers to produce highly skilled and knowledgeable teachers (Department of Education and Training 2015). The aim is to produce quality teachers who can function effectively from the first day they enter their classrooms (Department of Education and Training 2015).

United Kingdom (UK)

Government policies are in favour of inclusive education, and government plays a leading role in defining the content and structure of teacher preparation programmes offered at universities (Lawson, Norwich and Tash 2013: 150). Many positive developments exist in general teacher training, for example trainee teachers spend 120 days at schools gaining practical classroom experience (Lawson et al. 2013: 137). These developments are aimed at ensuring that teacher preparation takes place in school contexts where aspiring teachers can gain practical experience (Lawson et al. 2013: 137). A study of the teacher preparation programmes at six universities across England found that all the universities included general introductions to special needs education in their teacher preparation programmes (Lawson et al. 2013: 147). These universities also emphasise inclusion in other creative ways, for example by inviting speakers or learners with special needs to speak to their student teachers (Lawson et al. 2013: 147). Lawson et al. (2013: 137) conducted a study on one-year post graduate teacher preparation programmes, and found that special education needs are neglected in initial teacher preparation programmes in the UK. The Training and Development Agency (TDA) in England has developed guidelines to address this problem; these are aimed at guiding teacher preparation programmes towards a greater focus on special education needs (Lawson et al. 2013: 137). All teachers are now expected to be able to teach

learners with special education needs in inclusive classrooms (Lawson et al. 2013: 152).

Scotland

The Scottish government funded the Inclusive Practice Project (IPP) to develop new ways to prepare teachers for the challenges of inclusive education (Florian and Linklater 2010: 370). The IPP was firstly aimed at creating awareness and understanding in teachers about the learning challenges faced by children, and, secondly, at creating strategies that could help teachers address these learning challenges (Florian and Linklater 2010: 370). The University of Aberdeen has adapted their School of Education Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) to address the challenges of inclusive education (Florian and Linklater 2010: 370). As part of the PGDE programme, student teachers are expected to do a course in further professional studies (FPS) (Florian and Linklater 2010: 371). One of the aims of the FPS course is to expand teachers' knowledge, understanding and expertise in a specific professional area to enhance inclusive learning environments (Florian and Linklater 2010: 371). The FPS course promotes partnerships between teachers and other stakeholders in communities to develop inclusive education and inclusive communities (Florian and Linklater 2010: 372). Ultimately, the aim of teacher preparation programmes is to ensure that all newly qualified teachers are competent inclusive practitioners (Florian and Linklater 2010: 385).

United States of America (USA)

Inclusive education is a relatively new idea in the US and is driven by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA)* (U.S. Department of Education 2008: 2). Teacher preparation programmes have been adapted to prepare teachers for their roles as inclusive practitioners (Peebles and Mendaglio 2014: 245). Peebles and Mendaglio (2014: 245) have conducted research in teacher preparation, and found that teachers generally feel unprepared to take up their roles as inclusive practitioners because the teacher preparation programmes lack practical components. In a study on the characteristics of quality teacher education for the foundation phase, Du Plooy,

Zilindile, Desai, De Wet, Holtman, Julie, Moolla and Nomlomo (2016: 2) found that the US government spends huge amounts of money on research into educational challenges, but many people believe the money is not well spent, because the challenges in education continue to exist. Du Plooy et al. (2016: 6) found that more evidence-based research is needed to inform education policies and teacher preparation programmes. They recommend that evidence-based research be used to explore existing teacher preparation programmes, and the findings be used to develop new, quality teacher preparation programmes (Du Plooy et al. 2016: 6).

Canada

The Federal government promotes inclusive education on a constitutional level in Canada, but the individual provinces make decisions in terms of funding and distribution of resources (Sharma et al. 2006: 83). The provinces share decision-making powers with federal government in administrative decisions and providing financial support to teacher preparation institutions (Sharma et al. 2006: 83). The result of this system is that the practice of inclusive education differs from province to province, with some provinces strongly implementing inclusive practices, while others do less to implement inclusive practices (Sharma et al. 2006: 83). Alberta Education, for example, requires all their teachers to be skilled to be inclusive practitioners who are able to teach a diverse range of learners (Sharma et al. 2006: 83). This is reflected in the teacher preparation programmes offered at institutions in Alberta (Sharma et al. 2006: 83).

Singapore

The government in Singapore focuses mostly on economic prerogatives, and there is little focus on legislation to mandate inclusive educational practices (Wong and Wong 2015: 148; Sharma et al. 2006: 85). Research suggests that Grade R teachers in Singapore are not adequately prepared to function as inclusive practitioners (Wong and Wong 2015: 148; Sharma et al. 2006: 85). Trainee teachers generally have limited experience and opportunities to relate to children with special needs as part of their teacher preparation programmes (Sharma et al. 2006: 85). Fortunately, education policies are changing to be in line with international inclusive policies, and

in the past ten years the Ministry of Education (MOE) has invested major resources to train teachers and create an infrastructure for inclusion (Wong and Wong 2015: 151). An example of this is the Teachers Trained in Special Needs (TSN) initiative where 10 to 20% of teachers are trained to be resource persons so they can support students with disabilities in their schools (Wong and Wong 2015: 152).

Japan

Japan is following the trend of the world towards inclusive educational practices, and the Ministry of Education (MEXT) reported in 2012 that they aim to set up an inclusive education system and make changes to the law to promote inclusive education (Forlin, Kawai, Higuchi 2015: 314; MEXT 2015). Japan still has a long way to go though, and Forlin et al. (2015: 319) found that there is no formal course on inclusive education available for student teachers. Teachers can, however, obtain a special education teaching certificate after they obtain their regular teaching certificate (Forlin et al. 2015: 319). Students may also expand their knowledge by taking optional classes in special education topics (Forlin et al. 2015: 319). MEXT has committed itself to provide inclusive education that develops the “capabilities, independence and social participation” of children with special educational needs (MEXT 2015). The focus is on quality, and MEXT aims to ensure that universities offer teacher preparation programmes that respond to the needs of students and society (MEXT 2015). Professional graduate schools, such as the Teaching Profession Graduate School, have been established that specialise in fostering trained professionals (MEXT 2015). Japanese institutions have also started collaborating with foreign institutions that offer teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education (MEXT 2015). These collaborations create opportunities for international student exchange programmes, which places Japanese students’ learning in line with the international educational goals that were developed by the UN (MEXT 2015).

2.2.1.2 Developing countries

Based on the explanation of developing countries given in section 2.2, the following overview of Grade R teacher preparation programmes focuses on Botswana, Ghana, India and China as developing countries.

Botswana

Botswana fully embraces inclusive education; this is evident in the Revised Policy on Education of 1994 which was adopted by the Botswana government (Republic of Botswana 1994). This policy is in line with the UN guidelines on inclusive education and focuses heavily on special education, and recommends that elements of special education be included in all teacher training programmes (UNESCO 2014; Republic of Botswana 1994). In response to this government initiative, tertiary institutions started offering programmes in special education; the University of Botswana started offering programmes in special education in 1995 (Mukhopadhyay, Molosiwa & Moswela 2009: 52). Current university programmes allow student teachers to take special education subjects together with general education subjects (Mukhopadhyay et al. 2009: 53). In this way, student teachers learn to teach learners with diverse needs, and they learn skills such as counselling and remedial teaching, that could help them in special education environments (Mukhopadhyay et al. 2009: 53).

Ghana

The government of Ghana has committed itself to provide inclusive education in line with the international guidelines given by UNESCO (UNESCO 2014). Government developed the Inclusive Education Policy to guide the implementation of inclusive education (Ministry of Education 2015). Objective 3 of this policy promotes teacher preparation aimed at ensuring that teachers are well-informed and trained to offer quality inclusive education throughout Ghana (Ministry of Education 2015). Government recommends the Adoption of the Collaborative/Co-operative Training Model for inclusive education practices (Ministry of Education 2015). This model allows for collaborations and partnerships between stakeholders such as tertiary institutions and schools. Government is putting measures in place, so teacher

preparation programmes are available for pre-service as well as in-service teachers (Ministry of Education 2015). Teacher preparation in Ghana is offered in more than twenty colleges of education, and in two universities (Ministry of Education 2015; Ametepée and Anastasiou 2015: 149; Agbenyega and Deku 2011: 11). The colleges offer a three-year diploma course, and the universities offer a four-year BEd (Basic Education) programme. All colleges include a compulsory course on special needs and inclusive education in their three-year diploma, which is in line with the Inclusive Education Policy of government (Ministry of Education 2015; Ametepée and Anastasiou 2015: 149). Government is also working on projects with international non-governmental organisations such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as part of the teacher preparation initiatives (Ministry of Education 2015; Ametepée and Anastasiou 2015: 149). The “trainers of trainers” project is an example of such an initiative, where special educators receive in-service training, so they can train kindergarten and elementary regular education teachers in inclusive schools (Ametepée and Anastasiou 2015: 149).

India

Various government documents and policies show that the idea of inclusive education is not new in India, and government has been striving for many years to include children with disabilities in mainstream education (Das, Gichuru & Singh 2013: 698; Singal 2006: 358). The following government documents and initiatives have influenced the development of inclusive education and teacher preparation through the years: the Sargent Report of the 1940s, the Kothari Commission of the 1960s, the National Policy on Education of the 1980s, and Project Integrated Education of the Disabled Children which was launched in the 1980s (Singal 2006: 358). Inclusive education is, however, not a compulsory component of teacher preparation programmes, and teacher preparation programmes are either categorised as general education or special education, which results in many teachers not having the knowledge and skills needed for inclusive education (Singal 2006: 362; Das et al. 2013: 699). Studies found that pre-services teacher preparation programmes tend to focus on theoretical aspects of inclusive education rather than skills development, and very few student teachers had actual contact with people with disabilities (Sharma, Moore, & Sonawane 2009: 329). The result is that teachers

generally lack experience to cope with the challenges of the inclusive classroom (Das et al. 2013: 699). Government provides training to in-service teachers in the form of conferences and conventions (Das et al. 2013: 707).

China

China first promoted the idea of inclusive education when the Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China was passed in 1986 (Deng and Poon-Mc Brayer 2012: 118). Various laws, policies and regulations have been created since then to promote inclusive education (Deng and Poon-Mc Brayer 2012: 118; Zhou and Yang 2016: 92). Despite all these efforts by government, Zhou and Yang (2016: 96) found problems in the implementation of these laws, policies and regulations, as well as inadequate advocacy for inclusive education. These problems are reflected in the current teacher preparation programmes: current pre-service and in-service teacher preparation programmes place little emphasis on inclusive education (Zhou and Yang 2016: 96). Zhou and Yang (2016: 96) found that few institutions were able to offer quality teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education, because the institutions did not focus on inclusive education or there were few faculty members available to teach these programmes.

The government is employing a "whole school" approach in Hong Kong to ensure that children with special educational needs are accommodated in schools (Hong Kong Government 1977; Forlin 2010c: 177). Special education policy development started in Hong Kong in 1977 when government developed the first White Paper (Hong Kong Government 1977; Forlin 2010c: 178). Back then, government already prioritised teacher preparation and recommended that teacher preparation be expanded to provide inclusive education (Hong Kong Government 1977). Special emphasis was placed on the training of Grade R teachers at nurseries and pre-school centres (Hong Kong Government 1977). Government views special education as the responsibility of all teachers in the government education system and has developed various policies through the years to promote this philosophy (Forlin 2010c: 180). Various training courses have been developed so teachers can develop awareness and skills to cope with the challenges of inclusive education (Forlin 2010c: 180). Post graduate degrees specialising in special education are also

offered, including Master in Education (MEd) and Doctor in Education (DEd) (Forlin 2010:180).

2.2.2. South African context

Teacher training in South Africa was strongly dictated by apartheid government policies and was characterised by inequalities before 1994 (Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training 2011: 77; Lemmer and van Wyk 2010: 247; Drake 2014: 202; Green, Parker, Deacon and Hall 2011: 112). After 1994 the new government developed new policies to build a fair and equal education system: “Policy initiatives have also realigned teacher education with new social goals for a transformed society” (Lemmer and van Wyk 2010: 248; Proudlock 2014: 1; Badat and Sayed 2014: 127; Osman and Booth 2014: 161). Current teacher preparation programmes are driven by these policies and are designed to correct the inequalities of the past (Lemmer and van Wyk 2010: 261). The inclusion of children with learning challenges in education is one of the measures that government has put in place to promote equality in education, and teacher preparation programmes are being aligned so teachers can function as inclusive practitioners (Department of Education 1996; Department of Education 2006: 4; Donohue and Bornman 2014: 11). Aspiring Grade R teachers can opt to study either the BEd degree (Foundation Phase) or the Diploma for Grade R teaching (Andrich, Hill, Steenkamp 2015: 2). According to Atmore (2013: 158) the minimum requirement for ECD teachers is the Further Education and Training Certificate: ECD (Level 4) “which provides ECD practitioners with the necessary skills to facilitate the holistic development of young children and to offer quality ECD services in a variety of settings.” Based on the developments in education, it is clear that government aims to provide inclusive educational services to Grade R learners, and the aim is to structure teacher preparation programmes that will enable Grade R teachers to cope with the challenges of inclusive education (Department of Education White Paper No. 6 2001: 5; Department of Education 2006: 4). Despite the progress, challenges exist in the provision of inclusive education and in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education (Department of Basic Education 2012: 1; Drake 2014: 196; Phasha 2010: 176; Engelbrecht, Nel, Smit, Van Deventer 2016: 532). Osman and Booth (2014: 161)

found that teacher education in South Africa is ineffective, and they call for a reform in teacher education and a rebuilding of confidence and trust in teacher education.

An audit in 2000 showed that there were 156 ECD educator trainer providers in South Africa (Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training 2011: 134). Most of the training was done by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training 2011: 134). Grade R teacher qualifications ranged from NQF (National Qualifications Framework) level 1 certificates to high level degrees (Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training 2011: 135). Teacher training is now provided by 21 higher education institutions in South Africa (Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training 2011: 66; Green et al 2011: 113). Government recommends that Grade R teachers should now have at least NQF level 4 qualifications (Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training 2011: 135). Aspiring Grade R teachers can opt either to study for the BEd degree (Foundation Phase) or the Diploma for Grade R teaching (Andrich et al 2015: 2). The Department of Basic Education (2011) lists the following Grade R qualifications: Higher Certificate in Grade R Practices (NQF level 5, 120 credits), Advanced Certificate in Grade R Practices (NQF level 6, 120 credits), Diploma in Grade R Practices (NQF level 6, 360 credits). These qualifications can provide access to the Bachelor of Education (Foundation Phase) qualification (Department of Basic Education 2011).

Despite all the progress that has been made in teacher preparation through the years, Richter (2016: 1) found that South Africa has a shortage of qualified teachers. A serious shortage exists in the number of foundation phase teachers, including Grade R teachers who are being trained (Department of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training 2011: 50; Green et al. 2011: 111). One of the main reasons for the teacher shortages is that the number of school- age children is constantly growing (Richter 2016:1). Andrich et al (2015: 2) found that the Department of Education spends less money on Grade R teacher preparation so more money is available for Grade R infrastructure and facilities at schools. The challenge in South Africa is to produce more qualified Grade R teachers, and to produce more Grade R teachers able to function effectively as inclusive practitioners (Department of

Education White Paper No. 6 2001: 5; Department of Education 2006: 4; Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training 2011: 50; Green et al. 2011: 116; Heeralal and Jama 2014: 1507). In response to this situation, government recommends that more attention and resources be invested in teacher preparation programmes, including Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education (Department of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training 2011: 67). Education departments and academic institutions are looking for ways to collaborate in developing and offering these training courses (Andrich et al 2015: 2). In the spirit of a shared vision and co-operation, the University of South Africa (UNISA) and Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance (MGSLG) have formed a partnership to train 500 Grade R teachers in Gauteng (Taxer 2017). These two stakeholders are working closely with the Gauteng Department of Education to improve Grade R teacher training and provide academic support for Grade R teachers (Taxer 2017).

As part of their professional training, in-service teachers attend workshops and do short courses arranged by the Department of Education (Walton, Nel, Muller, Lebeloane 2014: 323). Despite such interventions, teachers still feel unprepared to cope as inclusive practitioners (Walton et al 2014: 329). Various factors, including overcrowded classrooms and a lack of institutional resources, contribute to the way teachers feel about inclusive education (Walton et al 2014: 329; Heeralal and Jama 2014: 1506). These problems, in themselves, make it difficult to manage the overall challenges of inclusive education. Walton and Lloyd (2012: 62) found a connection between challenges in teacher preparation programmes and teachers' negative experiences with inclusive educations. They found that teachers' negative attitudes can be ascribed to "lack of training and preparation" to cope in inclusive classrooms (Walton and Lloyd 2012: 62). They suggest that research should focus on teacher attitudes, as well as on the design of teacher preparation programmes to prepare teachers to cope with the challenges of inclusive education (Walton and Lloyd 2012: 64). Further recommendations include addressing challenges in teacher preparation programmes at pre-service level, and providing continuous, systemic support to be effective inclusive practitioners (Walton et al 2014: 330; Andrich et al 2015: 1).

Walton (2015) reported on an international conference on inclusive education that was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2013. Based on the presentations at the conference, she reported that South African universities are struggling to provide teacher education courses that are “conceptually coherent and pedagogically appropriate” for inclusive education (Walton 2015: 175). Various presenters at the conference were concerned that teacher preparation programmes in South Africa failed to prepare teachers to cope with diverse learners in diverse contexts (Walton 2015: 175). The presenters made various suggestions to address this challenge, for example teacher preparation programmes employ situated learning approaches (Walton 2015: 175). These approaches will be revisited in section 2.6, which deals with models of Grade R teacher preparation. Osman and Booth (2014: 160) also added their voice to that of such researchers as Walton and Lloyd (2012: 62), calling for more research into teacher preparation programmes to find ways to improve the situation.

2.2.3 Differences between South Africa and other countries

Different countries have different educational contexts and implement inclusive education differently (Walton 2015: 173). This means that Grade R teacher preparation programmes that work well in one country may not work well in another country, and each country should develop Grade R teacher preparation programmes that can equip inclusive practitioners to meet the social and educational needs of that specific country. Despite the different educational contexts, it is true that countries often share similar experiences and challenges, and studies and findings of one country cannot be generalized to another country. Walton and Lloyd (2012: 63) state that research in international experiences in teacher preparation for inclusive education can produce findings that can be used to guide inclusive education practices in South Africa where appropriate. This section provides a brief overview of the differences between Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education in South Africa and those of other countries. This approach places Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in a bigger, international context, which helps to provide a lens for examining the context and effectiveness of Grade R teacher preparation in South Africa.

South Africa is classified as a developing country (Srivastava et al 2015: 184). One would thus assume that Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa has more commonalities with other developing countries than with developed countries.

Many positive developments have taken place in developed countries: Various stakeholders, including Grade R teachers, are involved in the development of teacher preparation programmes in developed countries (Department of Education and Training 2004: 2). This ensures that teacher preparation programmes are relevant and meaningful (Sharma et al 2006: 80). In Australia, however, many universities have not included special education in primary education programmes (Varcoe and Boyle 2013: 326). In the UK, heavy emphasis is placed on practical experience and trainee teachers are placed in schools for 120 days to gain practical classroom experience so they can be better prepared for real inclusive practices. (Lawson et al. 2013: 137). The Training and Development Agency (TDA) in England has developed guidelines to ensure all teachers, including mainstream and special education teachers, are able to teach learners with special education needs in inclusive classrooms (Lawson et al. 2013: 152). This is also happening in other developed countries, for example in Scotland and Canada (Florian and Linklater 2010: 385; Sharma et al. 2006: 83). Developed countries have strong economies, and can afford to invest a lot of money in teacher preparation programmes, for example the Scottish government is funding the Inclusive Practice Project (IPP) to develop new ways to prepare teachers for inclusive education (Florian and Linklater 2010: 370). A lot of money is also invested in research for teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education in the US (Peebles and Mendaglio 2014: 245). Despite all the good efforts by government and other stakeholders, Peebles and Mendaglio (2014: 245) found that teachers in the US generally feel they have not gained much practical experience from the teacher preparation programmes that are available. Singapore used to invest most of the resources in economic development rather than in teacher preparation for inclusive education, but the situation is changing and the Teachers Trained in Special Needs (TSN) initiative has been introduced, where 10 to 20% of teachers are trained to be “resource persons” so they can provide support for students with disabilities in their schools (Wong and Wong 2015: 152). The Japanese government has established professional graduate

schools, like the Teaching Profession Graduate School to foster trained professionals (MEXT 2015). Japanese universities have formed collaborations with foreign universities and created exchange programmes so Japanese Grade R teacher preparation can be in line with the international educational goals of inclusive education that were developed by the UN (MEXT 2015).

Developing countries have also embraced the ideals of inclusive education, as is reflected in the Grade R teacher preparation programmes offered in these countries. Tertiary institutions in Botswana started offering programmes in special education in the 1990s (Mukhopadhyay, Molosiwa & Moswela 2009: 52). Current university programmes enable student teachers to take special education subjects together with general education subjects, and student teachers gain valuable knowledge and skills to help them cope as inclusive practitioners (Mukhopadhyay et al. 2009: 53). In Ghana, the government promotes partnerships between stakeholders, including tertiary institutions and schools, to prepare Grade R teachers for inclusive education (Ministry of Education 2015). Government recommends that the Adoption of the Collaborative/Co-operative Training Model be used for this purpose (Ministry of Education 2015). Student teachers in Ghana can register for a three-year diploma course or a four-year BEd (Basic Education) programme, and all colleges include a compulsory course on special needs and inclusive education (Ministry of Education 2015; Ametepee and Anastasiou 2015: 149). Ghana has also formed partnerships with international non-governmental organisations, such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), as part of the teacher preparation initiatives; the “trainers of trainers” project is an example of such a project, where special educators are trained to train other teachers (Ministry of Education 2015; Ametepee and Anastasiou 2015: 149). Inclusive education is not a compulsory component of teacher preparation programmes in India, which results in many teachers not having the knowledge and skills needed for inclusive education (Singal 2006: 362; Das et al. 2013: 699). Pre-services teacher preparation programmes used to focus on theoretical aspects of inclusive education rather than on skills development, but government is trying to make up for this by providing training to in-service teachers in the form of conferences and conventions (Sharma et al 2009: 329; Das et al. 2013: 707). Zhou and Yang (2016: 96) found that current pre-service and in-service teacher preparation programmes in China place little emphasis on

inclusive education. They also found that few institutions were able to offer quality teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education because these institutions did not focus on inclusive education, and few faculty members were available to teach these programmes (Zhou and Yang 2016: 96).

This overview of Grade R teacher preparation programmes shows that developed as well as developing countries all over the world are embracing inclusive education, and governments are striving to develop Grade R teacher preparation programmes that effectively prepare Grade R teachers for inclusive classrooms. Teacher preparation programmes are constantly updated and developed as government policies change to meet the needs of inclusive societies.

The overview has shown that some countries are making more progress than others, and in some countries, for example China, the development and progress appear to be very slow (Zhou and Yang 2016: 96). The inclusion of learners with learning challenges in education is one of the measures that the South African government has put in place to promote equality in society and in education, and teacher preparation programmes are continuously being adapted so teachers can have knowledge and skills to function as inclusive practitioners (Department of Education 1996; Department of Education 2006: 4; Donohue and Bornman 2014: 11).

This overview also showed that different countries face similar challenges as they strive to prepare Grade R teachers for inclusive education. One of the challenges is that many countries focus too much on theory in their teacher preparation programmes, and teachers experience difficulties when they have to implement inclusive education. This is also the situation in South Africa, where presenters at a conference on teacher preparation reported a lack of practical training for teachers (Walton 2015: 175).

In various countries, teachers were not consulted when teacher preparation programmes were designed, which often results in a mismatch between the theory that is taught to student teachers and the real challenges that practicing teachers face as inclusive practitioners. In the South African context, Walton et al (2014: 321) state that one needs to obtain the views of Grade R teachers to determine whether

teacher preparation programmes are effective in preparing Grade R teachers to be inclusive practitioners. It is important for policy makers and designers of teacher preparation programmes to get “insider perspectives” and listen to the “voice” of Grade R teachers when designing teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education (Walton 2015: 175).

The developed countries appear to have more success with developing Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education: one of the reasons could be that they started embracing inclusive education many years before developing countries did, and they had more time to address the challenges of inclusive education. The South African government started focusing on inclusive education after 1994 when new policies were developed to build a fair and equal education system (Lemmer and van Wyk 2010: 248; Proudlock 2014: 1; Badat and Sayed 2014: 127; Osman and Booth 2014: 161). It also appears that developing countries are lagging behind developed countries, because developing countries do not have the funds and resources that developed countries have to conduct research and improve Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. Andrich et al (2015: 2) found that the South African government spent less money on Grade R teacher preparation, so more money is, theoretically, available for Grade R infrastructure and facilities at schools.

Finally, the overview showed that most countries, including South Africa, use the additional model for teacher preparation for inclusion. Scotland, Canada and Ghana are the only countries that use the infusion model. The governments of these three countries have initiated significant reform in their teacher preparation programmes, and they place strong emphasis on the importance of preparing teachers to cope as inclusive practitioners. The overview shows that teachers in these three countries are able to cope better as inclusive practitioners than their colleagues in the other countries. This finding suggests that teachers benefit more from the infusion model than from the additional model. The models of teacher preparation for inclusion are further discussed in section 2.4.4.

Based on the findings of the literature review, one can conclude that countries have different challenges in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive

education, but there are many similarities in their experiences as well. Based on this, it is logical that countries learn from the experiences of other countries and form collaborations, for example between governments and between tertiary institutions. Japan and Ghana are examples of countries that have successfully formed collaborations with other countries (MEXT 2015; Ministry of Education 2015; Ametepee and Anastasiou 2015: 149).

2.3 WHAT ARE THE EXPERIENCES OF GRADE R TEACHERS WITH REGARD TO GRADE R TEACHER PREPARATION FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

The laws, policies and regulations governing Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education often appear idealistic, and one wonders how well these laws, policies and regulations are implemented. This section explores the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. The assumption is, if Grade R teachers, as inclusive practitioners, have positive experiences, then it could mean few or no challenges exist in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. It is important to be aware that very little data are available on Grade R teacher experiences of teacher preparation for inclusive education, with the result that this section is mostly informed by studies on general teacher experiences of inclusive education. Developed countries appear to be ahead of developing countries in terms of timeframes and resources, but this section shows that challenges exist in teacher attitudes towards teacher preparation for inclusive education in almost all countries.

2.3.1 International context

This section seeks to understand the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in an international context. This forms a good starting point towards understanding Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in a local context.

2.3.1.1 Developed countries

Developing and developed countries often share similar challenges in the provision of inclusive education, as well as in teacher preparation for inclusive education (Walton 2015: 176). This section seeks to provide insights into Grade R teacher preparation in developed countries.

Australia

Richards and Clough (2004: 85) found that pre-service teachers were generally positive about teacher preparation programmes, but the teachers felt they needed more training to support diverse learners with diverse needs. Teachers also felt they needed more teacher education programmes to develop the way they think about inclusion, so they could be more positive and practical as inclusive practitioners (Richards and Clough 2004: 84). Varcoe and Boyle (2013: 333) state that teacher preparation programmes that focus on inclusion can help develop positive attitudes in pre-service teachers. These findings correlate with the findings of Sharma et al (2006: 88) that many pre-service teachers had negative attitudes towards inclusion because teacher preparation programmes failed to instil positive attitudes in them. Forlin and Chambers (2011:18) found that only 18% of newly-graduated teachers felt they were very well or excellently prepared to teach learners with special education needs in inclusive classrooms; 25 % felt their preparation was good, 32% felt their preparation was satisfactory, and 25 % felt their preparation was unsatisfactory. These statistics show a need to improve teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education.

United Kingdom (UK)

Many English student teachers feel they are not adequately exposed to special needs situations in their teacher preparation programmes (Lawson et al. 2013: 148). University tutors and school staff felt the same (Lawson et al. 2013: 147). The general consensus was that the one-year PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate in Education) was too short to adequately prepare teachers for inclusion (Lawson et al. 2013: 147). One positive aspect of the PGCE programme, though, is that it is both

university- and school-based, and pre-service teachers gained valuable practical experience at schools (DfE 2010; Lawson et al. 2013: 145). In a study conducted in Scotland, Florian and Linklater (2010: 385) found that student teachers at the University of Aberdeen were positive about inclusion and also held positive views about teacher preparation programmes that help them address learning challenges in their classrooms.

United States of America (USA)

Peebles and Mendaglio (2014: 245) found that teachers in the US generally feel that teacher preparation programmes fail because the focus is too much on theory, and they need more practical experience in inclusive settings. Du Plooy et al. (2016: 6) suggest that new and improved teacher preparation programmes be developed that provide teachers with more practical experience, thereby improving their views on inclusion, as well as their views on teacher preparation programmes for inclusion.

Canada

Sharma et al. (2006) conducted a four country study to explore teacher attitudes towards inclusive education. The study included Canada, Australia, Singapore and Hong Kong (Sharma et al. 2006). They found that Canadian teachers felt more positive about implementing inclusive education than teachers in the other countries (Sharma et al. 2006: 89). Based on this finding, one can assume that Canadian teachers feel positive about the teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education.

Singapore

Grade R teachers in Singapore have negative attitudes towards inclusive education (Wong and Wong 2015: 148; Sharma et al. 2006: 85). They feel teacher preparation programmes would be more effective if practical components were included (Sharma et al. 2006: 85, 88). Government is aware of the challenges that teachers face, and started to improve teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education (Wong and Wong 2015: 151). Teacher preparation programmes are now designed to

provide awareness, training and knowledge of diversity and special needs to teachers (Wong and Wong 2015: 151).

Japan

Forlin et al. (2015: 329) found that most Japanese teachers felt that teacher preparation programmes were not effective to prepare them for inclusive education. Possible reasons for this include insufficient content of teacher preparation programmes (Forlin et al. 2015: 326). Teacher preparation programmes also do not provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to interact with learners with diverse learning needs (Forlin et al. 2015: 326). The general feeling is that government should do more to reform teacher education and in-service training systems, so all teachers can be competent inclusive practitioners (Forlin et al. 2015: 329; MEXT 2015).

2.3.1.2 Developing countries

This section seeks to provide insights into Grade R teacher preparation in developing countries.

Botswana

Mukhopadhyay et al. (2009: 53) conducted a study at the University of Botswana to determine the level of preparedness of teacher trainees to cope as inclusive practitioners. The teacher trainees felt that teacher preparation programmes failed to provide them with the knowledge and skills they needed to cope as inclusive practitioners (Mukhopadhyay et al. 2009: 53). Chhabra, Srivastava & Srivastava (2010: 225) found that teachers in Botswana had negative attitudes towards inclusive education, and teachers felt that teacher preparation programmes failed to provide the knowledge and training they needed to be inclusive practitioners. Teachers felt they needed specialized training and professional support to cope as inclusive practitioners (Chhabra et al. 2010: 226). Kuyini and Mangope (2011: 34) conducted studies in Botswana and Ghana; they also found that teachers in Botswana had negative experiences with inclusive education and teacher preparation programmes

for inclusive education. Teachers felt teacher preparation programmes should be more skills oriented (Kuyini and Mangope 2011: 31).

Ghana

Student teachers in Ghana had negative experiences about traditional teacher preparation programmes, they felt that teacher preparation programmes failed to provide support for them (Agbenyega and Deku 2011: 13). Teachers also felt that their own experiences with children with diverse learning needs were important and new teacher preparation programmes should emphasise the importance of reflective teacher practices (Agbenyega and Deku 2011: 11). Studies have shown that various factors hamper attempts to implement inclusive education in Ghana: limited resources is an example of such a factor (Ametepée and Anastasiou 2015: 150).

India

Das et al. (2013: 704) found that teachers felt that teacher preparation programmes failed. Teachers indicated they lacked knowledge to implement inclusive education (Das et al. 2013: 707). Teachers also indicated a strong preference for conferences and workshops to further their professional development (Das et al. 2013: 704). In earlier studies, Sharma et al. (2009: 321) found that teacher preparation programmes failed because too much emphasis was placed on knowledge, and too little attention was given to practical skills that teachers needed to teach diverse learners. The lack of resources was a concern for teachers, and teachers also felt that teacher preparation programmes should include information on the use of resources that are available to teach diverse learners (Sharma et al. 2009: 327). That would help build their confidence as inclusive practitioners (Sharma et al. 2009: 327). Teacher attitudes could also improve if more emphasis was placed on practical strategies that teachers could use in inclusive classrooms; and pre-service teachers should also be exposed to students with disabilities (Sharma et al. 2009: 329). Teachers also felt they should be consulted when teacher preparation programmes were developed, so they could provide input to make the programmes more meaningful and relevant for them (Das et al. 2013: 708).

China

Chinese teachers felt that teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education failed because there was no or very little content on inclusive education (Deng and Poon-Mc Brayer 2012: 120). That resulted in very few teachers qualifying as inclusive practitioners, which in turn resulted in a lack of experience and expertise among teachers. (Zhou and Yang 2016: 88, 96; Deng and Poon-Mc Brayer 2012: 120). Teachers felt that inadequate teacher preparation and a lack of knowledge of inclusive education made it difficult for them to understand learners with special educational needs (Zhou and Yang 2016: 96).

2.3.2 South African context

The previous section gave an overview of teacher preparation programmes that have been developed to prepare Grade R teachers to cope with the challenges of inclusive education in South Africa. The data show that good progress has been made by government and training institutions to develop Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education, but one needs to explore the experiences of Grade R teachers to determine if these programmes are effective in preparing them to cope as inclusive practitioners (Walton et al 2014: 321). This approach is in line with the qualitative nature of this study (See chapter 4).

Walton (2015: 175) states that it is important to get “insider perspectives” and listen to the “voice” of the teacher when exploring inclusive education. Walton et al (2014: 319) found that many South African teachers feel they lack the knowledge and skill to cope with the challenges of inclusive education. One of the reasons for this situation is that many teachers were trained before the start of the new South Africa (pre-1994), when education was more exclusive than inclusive (Walton et al 2014: 321). During this time teacher preparation was racially oriented and unequal, which resulted in the majority of teachers being under-qualified or unqualified. Government is working on ways to address this issue, and has developed in-service training programmes to equip teachers with knowledge and skills for inclusive education (Walton et al 2014: 219). Walton et al (2014: 319) wanted to determine whether these programmes were successful, so they conducted research at a full service school to

obtain the views of teachers who attended a workshop to equip them for inclusive, “multilevel” teaching. Teachers felt the workshop was not effective, and they were unable to implement inclusive strategies after the workshop due to “various contextual and systemic constraints” (Walton et al 2014: 328). They felt that a once-off workshop was not enough, and ongoing, school-based support would help them cope with the challenges of inclusive education (Walton et al 2014: 330).

Heeralal and Jama (2014) conducted a study in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, to understand the implementation of inclusive education in that geographical area. They found that teachers lacked knowledge and skills in inclusive education because they had limited exposure to teacher preparation programmes and workshops (Heeralal and Jama 2014: 1507). They reported that schools within the ambit of their study were not functioning effectively as inclusive schools, and teachers needed more workshops and continued support from the Department of Education (Heeralal and Jama 2014: 1507).

Although very little data is available on the experiences of South African Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation programmes, the above findings show that Grade R teachers generally have negative experiences with Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. The findings show that Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education should be structured in such a way as to equip them with the knowledge and skills they need to cope as inclusive practitioners.

2.3.3 Differences between South Africa and other countries

Teachers in developed countries appear to have different experiences about teacher preparation for inclusive education, with most teachers showing negative experiences: In Australia, Richards and Clough (2004: 85) found that pre-service teachers were generally positive about teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. Later studies found, however, that teacher attitudes were more negative, and teachers felt more teacher preparation programmes were needed so they could be better inclusive practitioners (Sharma et al 2006: 88; Richards and Clough 2004: 84; Forlin and Chambers 2011:18; Varcoe and Boyle 2013: 333). Student teachers

in the UK had mixed experiences with teacher preparation programmes, with many of them indicating that teacher preparation programmes would be better if a component was included that enabled them to gain more practical experience in schools (Lawson et al. 2013: 148; DoE 2010; Florian and Linklater 2010: 385). In the USA, teachers had negative experiences with teacher preparation programmes and they wanted more practical experience in inclusive settings (Peebles and Mendaglio 2014: 245; Du Plooy et al. 2016: 6). The situation is the same in Singapore, where Grade R teachers suggest that teacher preparation programmes could improve if more focus was placed on practical experience (Wong and Wong 2015: 148; Sharma et al. 2006: 85). Japanese pre-service teachers felt that teacher preparation programmes failed because they were not given enough opportunities to interact with learners with special needs (Forlin et al. 2015: 329). Sharma et al. (2006) studied teacher attitudes towards inclusive education in Australia, Canada, Singapore and Hong Kong. They found that Canadian teachers had more positive experiences with implementing inclusive education than teachers in the other countries (Sharma et al. 2006: 89).

Teachers in developing countries have similar experiences with teacher preparation for inclusive education as teachers in developed countries. Studies in Botswana show that teachers have negative experiences with teacher preparation for inclusive education, with many teachers indicating that teacher preparation programmes should be more skills orientated (Mukhopadhyay et al. 2009: 53; Chhabra et al. 2010: 226; Kuyini and Mangope 2011: 31). Teachers in Ghana feel that teacher preparation programmes fail because these programmes do not give them opportunity to interact with special needs learners in a practical way (Agbenyega and Deku 2011: 13). Teachers in India also have negative experiences, they feel too little emphasis is placed on practical skills (Sharma et al 2009: 327). They indicate a need for in-service teacher training in the form of conferences and workshops (Das et al. 2013: 704). Chinese teachers have negative experiences as well, they feel the teacher preparation programmes do not have sufficient content on inclusive education (Deng and Poon-Mc Brayer 2012: 120; Zhou and Yang 2016: 96).

Grade R teachers in South Africa have the same concerns as their international colleagues, and they indicate a need for more practical training, more focus on

knowledge and skills development, and a need for in-service training and continued professional support (Walton et al 2014: 321; Walton and Lloyd 2012: 62; Heeralal and Jama 2014: 1507).

2.4 HOW DO CURRENT TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMMES PREPARE GRADE R TEACHERS TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

This section explores Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education by asking how prepared Grade R teachers are to face the challenges of inclusive education. In this context, the term “prepared” means they are able to fulfil their roles as Grade R teachers in inclusive classrooms. The assumption is that well-prepared Grade R teachers are proof that Grade R teacher preparation programmes are effective. One can also assume if Grade R teachers are not well prepared for inclusive education, it means that Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education are not effective.

2.4.1 International context

This section seeks to understand the international context of how current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education.

2.4.1.1 Developed countries

The following developed countries were selected for the literature review: Australia, United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada, Singapore and Japan.

Australia

The Australian government has embraced inclusivity and put measures in place to promote inclusive education, for example the Competency Framework for Teachers (Forlin and Chambers 2011:17). Teachers also have positive attitudes towards inclusive education, but feel they need more training to prepare them to face the challenges of inclusive education (Richards and Clough 2004: 84, 85; Varcoe and Boyle 2013: 333; Sharma et al 2006: 88; Forlin and Chambers 2011:18).

United Kingdom (UK)

Government policies in the UK are in favour of inclusive education, and government plays a leading role in providing guidelines for teacher preparation programmes that are offered at universities (Lawson et al 2013: 150). Studies found that English universities promote inclusive education in the courses they develop, and in other creative ways, for example by inviting speakers or learners with special needs to speak to their student teachers (Lawson et al. 2013: 147). English teachers feel, however, they are not adequately prepared to be inclusive practitioners (Lawson et al. 2013: 147, 148). The Scottish government also promotes inclusive education. The Inclusive Practice Project (IPP) is an example of the government's efforts. This project aims to develop new ways of preparing teachers to cope with the challenges of inclusive education (Florian and Linklater 2010: 370). These efforts are successful, because Scottish teachers have more positive experiences and feel more positive about their preparedness for inclusive education than English teachers (Florian and Linklater 2010: 385).

United States of America (USA)

Legislation and policies are in place that promote inclusivity in education, for example the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA)* (U.S. Department of Education 2008: 2). Teacher preparation programmes have also been adapted so teachers can cope as inclusive practitioners (Peebles and Mendaglio 2014: 245). Despite all the progress, studies found that teacher preparation programmes lack practical components (Peebles and Mendaglio 2014: 245). The result of this situation is that teachers in the USA face challenges as inclusive practitioners, and they feel that teacher preparation programmes fail to prepare them for inclusive education (Peebles and Mendaglio 2014: 245; Du Plooy et al. 2016: 6).

Canada

The Federal government promotes inclusive education on a constitutional level in Canada, and the provinces implement the policies and make decisions in terms of

funding and distribution of resources (Sharma et al. 2006: 83). Sharma et al (2006:89) conducted a four country study to explore teacher attitudes to inclusive education. They found that Canadian teachers have positive attitudes towards inclusive education, and they feel well prepared to teach in inclusive classrooms (Sharma et al. 2006: 89).

Singapore

Education policies are changing in Singapore to be in line with international inclusive policies, and the Ministry of Education (MOE) has invested major resources to train teachers and create an infrastructure for inclusion (Wong and Wong 2015: 151). The Teachers Trained in Special Needs (TSN) initiative is an example of such efforts by the MOE. This initiative allows for 10 to 20% of teachers to be trained to be resource persons to support students with disabilities in their schools (Wong and Wong 2015: 152). Despite the progress made by government, teachers in Singapore do not feel well prepared to face the challenges of inclusive education (Wong and Wong 2015: 148, 151; Sharma et al. 2006: 85, 88).

Japan

Japan is following the trend of the world towards inclusive educational practices, and the Ministry of Education (MEXT) is working towards setting up an inclusive education system. This includes changing the law to promote inclusive education (Forlin, Kawai, Higuchi 2015: 314; MEXT 2015). More development is needed though, because most teachers in Japan feel they are not well prepared to be inclusive practitioners (Forlin et al. 2015: 326, 329; MEXT 2015).

2.4.1.2 Developing countries

Based on the explanations given in section 2.2, the following developing countries were selected for the literature review: Botswana, Ghana, India and China.

Botswana

Botswana is also in line with the global trend of embracing inclusive education. This is evident in the Revised Policy on Education of 1994 which was adopted by the Botswana government (Republic of Botswana 1994). The policy focuses on special education, and recommends that elements of special education be included in all teacher training programmes (UNESCO 2014; Republic of Botswana 1994). Despite good progress, teachers in Botswana feel that teacher preparation programmes fail to prepare them for inclusive education (Mukhopadhyay et al. 2009: 53; Chhabra et al. 2010: 225, 226; Kuyini and Mangope 2011: 31; 35).

Ghana

The government of Ghana has committed itself to providing inclusive education (UNESCO 2014). Government developed the Inclusive Education Policy and have various projects that guide teacher preparation for inclusive education (Ministry of Education 2015). Ghanaian teachers, however, have negative attitudes towards inclusive education and they feel that teacher preparation programmes fail to prepare them for inclusive education (Agbenyega and Deku 2011: 11, 13; Ameteppee and Anastasiou 2015: 150).

India

The Indian government has been striving for many years to include children with disabilities in mainstream education (Das, Gichuru & Singh 2013: 698; Singal 2006: 358). The following government documents and initiatives have been developed to promote inclusive education and teacher preparation through the years: the Sargent Report of the 1940s, the Kothari Commission of the 1960s, the National Policy on Education of the 1980s, and Project Integrated Education of the Disabled Children which was launched in the 1980s (Singal 2006: 358). There appear to be challenges in the implementation of government legislation and policies, because teachers in India feel they are not adequately prepared to face the challenges of inclusive education (Das et al. 2013: 704, 707, 708; Sharma et al. 2009: 321, 327, 329).

China

China started promoting the idea of inclusive education when the Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China was passed in the 1980s (Deng and Poon-Mc Brayer 2012: 118). Zhou and Yang (2016: 96) found that few institutions offered quality teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education though, because the institutions did not focus on inclusive education or did not have enough faculty members available to teach these programmes. The result of this lack of training is that Chinese teachers feel they are not adequately prepared to be inclusive practitioners (Zhou and Yang 2016: 88, 96; Deng and Poon-Mc Brayer 2012: 120).

2.4.2 South African context

Based on the “insider” views of Grade R teachers in section 2.3.2 one can conclude that Grade R teachers are not prepared to face the challenges of inclusive education in South Africa. The literature review identified shortcomings in current teacher preparation programmes, which means these programmes are not effective in preparing Grade R teachers for inclusive education. The fact that Grade R teachers feel they are unable to cope as inclusive practitioners in Grade R classrooms shows that more work needs to be done to build a fully inclusive education system in South Africa.

2.4.3 Differences between South Africa and other countries

The overview of Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education has shown that countries in different parts of the world have embraced the ideals of inclusive education and have developed policies to turn these ideals into inclusive practices. Training institutions have also developed teacher preparation programmes to prepare Grade R teachers to cope in inclusive classrooms. Despite all these efforts, the findings also show that Grade R level teachers in all countries have negative experiences with teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. The exception is Canada, where Grade R level teachers have more positive experiences with teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. The Department of

Basic Education conducted a national survey in 2015 and found that 12,336 Grade R teachers in South Africa needed training and qualification upgrading (Department of Basic Education 2015). South Africa is not very different from the rest of the world in these respects, and Grade R teachers in South Africa have the same negative experiences as Grade R level teachers elsewhere (Walton et al 2014: 321; Walton and Lloyd 2012: 62; Heeralal and Jama 2014: 1507). Grade R level teachers have identified various shortcomings in current teacher preparation programmes, which result in their feeling unprepared to cope with the challenges of inclusive education. Canada is the exception, and Canadian Grade R level teachers confidently indicate they are sufficiently prepared to cope in inclusive classrooms. Although each country has unique challenges requiring unique solutions, the successes in Canada lead one to ask what lessons other countries, including South Africa, can learn from the education system in Canada. This would be an informative and valuable study for future researchers. Section 2.3.5 will provide more insight into South African policies that influence Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education in South Africa.

2.4.4 Models of Grade R teacher preparation for Inclusive Education

Different countries use various models for Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, Delport (2013: 511) define a model as a “representation of reality.” They further state that a model has a “guiding function” and can be used to guide research on a certain phenomenon (De Vos et al 2013: 36). By exploring the models of Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education that are used in various countries, one could get a sense of what works well in those countries. This information could help local researchers and policy makers to learn from other countries as they strive to develop or improve local models of Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. Walton and Lloyd (2012: 63) suggest that more research is needed in international experiences in teacher preparation for inclusive education, and the findings could guide inclusive education practices in South Africa where appropriate. Inclusive education is relatively new in South Africa, and South African researchers and policy makers would benefit and learn a lot from the practices of countries with a longer history of inclusive education. Good and ground breaking South African research could also produce findings that benefit

other countries and make it possible for them to learn from the inclusive practices in South Africa.

Walton and Lloyd (2012: 63) identify two “broad approaches” to teacher preparation for inclusive education. The first approach is an “infused” approach where inclusion is taught as part of a course or a curriculum (Walton and Lloyd 2012: 63). The second approach is the additional approach, which involves “single unit courses that engage students with various aspects of the philosophy and practice of inclusion” (Walton and Lloyd 2012: 63). They identify the following examples of topics that can be offered as single unit courses: “preparation to work with the families of children with ‘special education needs’; engaging in collaborative collegial relationships, such as co-teaching; interacting positively with people with disabilities; and apprenticeship in inclusive schools” (Walton and Lloyd 2012: 63). “Collaborative inquiry and site-based supported learning” are popular topics for in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education (Walton and Lloyd 2012: 64).

Workshops and conferences have also been identified as well-accepted approaches to prepare Grade R teachers to cope as inclusive practitioners (Walton et al 2014: 323). Researchers have also proposed a model where a consultant works with groups of teachers to help them develop skills for inclusive education (Williams, Olivier, Pienaar 2009). Another approach places emphasis on the benefits of student teachers gaining practical experience by doing practice teaching in inclusive environments, and teacher educators “living the values of inclusivity” while they teach modules on inclusive education (Walton and Lloyd 2012: 64). Walton and Lloyd (2012: 68) recommend that a model for teacher preparation for inclusion should enable student teachers to “develop a collaborative and classroom-based knowledge-of-inclusive practice by implementing, reflecting on and theorising on inclusive pedagogies.” The goal of such a model is to implement inclusive pedagogies in practical ways.

Walton et al (2014) conducted a study in South Africa to find out how teachers at an inclusive school felt about a workshop as a means of preparing them for inclusive education. Immediately after the workshop teachers felt confident that they could apply the inclusive techniques and strategies they learnt at the workshop, but eight

months after the workshop the same teachers felt negative about the workshop (Walton et al 2014: 328). The teachers felt they were unable to implement and apply the inclusive techniques and strategies they learnt due to “systemic and contextual constraints” (Walton et al 2014: 328). These constraints include: increased workload, huge numbers of learners and the need for teacher assistants (Walton et al 2014: 326). Teachers were also concerned about the lack of follow-up and support after the workshop, and they indicated a need for school-based support (Walton et al 2014: 326). Based on these findings one can conclude that workshops cannot be used as a sole means to equip teachers with skills and knowledge they need to cope as inclusive practitioners. Walton et al (2014: 330) state that most teachers who are currently practising have not received pre-service preparation for inclusive education; and they recommend that in-service teachers be given support in the form of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) rather than workshops.

Presenters at the (SAALED) International Conference on Inclusive Education that was held in Johannesburg in 2013 reported that various initiatives were underway in South Africa to train teachers to become inclusive practitioners (Walton 2015: 173). The challenge was, however, that academics found it difficult to develop teacher preparation programmes that were “conceptually coherent and pedagogically appropriate,” which points to a need for a more situated learning approach to teacher preparation for inclusive education (Walton 2015: 175). Slavin (2012: 220) describes situated learning as learning that takes place through performing “real-life, authentic tasks.” In the context of this study, situated learning could refer to Grade R teacher preparation in natural settings, for example in inclusive schools where student teachers learn to cope as inclusive practitioners through interactions with a diversity of learners and experienced teachers.

Richter (2016: 1) conducted an empirical investigation in teacher training and found that South Africa is experiencing a shortage of teachers, and more teachers need to be trained to meet the demand. He suggests that a school-based training model (SBTM) could help improve this situation. (Richter 2016: 6). According to this model, student teachers are appointed as assistant teachers (Richter 2016: 6). This would help alleviate teacher shortages, and student teachers would also benefit, because they would gain valuable practical experience as they interact and collaborate with

experienced teachers and other student teachers (Richter 2016: 6). In the context of this study on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education this would mean that Grade R student teachers perform “real” teaching in “real” Grade R classrooms (Slavin 2012: 220). Richter’s study found that students teachers trained in this way are “professionally better prepared” than student teachers who study full time at a training institution (Richter 2016: 6). These findings are in line with the findings of Walton (2015: 175) who also extols the benefits of situated learning. This model could have challenges though, for example some principals could expect student teachers to do the same amount of work as full time teachers due to teacher shortages (Richter 2016: 6). Despite the challenges, the SBTM model has definite advantages and can be seen as a viable alternative to the traditional model where student teachers are full time students at training institutions. More research is needed to understand the challenges associated with the SBTM model and to find ways to address these challenges.

Osman and Booth (2014: 160) state that more research is needed to improve the schooling system in South Africa. They propose that research focus on the roles of teacher educators, student teachers and practising teachers (Osman and Booth 2014: 159). One of their recommendations is that teacher education models focus on the issues of teaching and strive to bring about collaborations between teacher educators, student teachers and practising teachers (Osman and Booth 2014: 170). Petker and Petersen (2014: 131) recommend that “service-learning” be incorporated into teacher preparation programmes, because this makes it possible for student teachers to learn “in and from practice.” This approach makes it possible for student teachers to integrate their classroom learning with their practical experiences (Petker and Petersen 2014: 132). This model definitely has potential, because it can strengthen relationships between different stakeholders, including the university, the school and the community (Petker and Petersen 2014: 132). More research is, however, needed to identify specific ways that this model can be used to prepare Grade R teachers to cope as inclusive practitioners and build inclusive learning environments.

Andrich et al (2015) conducted a study on training Grade R teachers to impart visual perceptual skills for early reading. They recommend that Grade R teachers be

trained using a “progressive model” of in-service and pre-service professional training (Andrich et al 2015: 1). They recommend that government and training institutions collaborate to develop pre-service and in-service training for Grade R teachers (Andrich et al 2015: 1). In-service training could include further studies, workshops, conferences, and continued monitoring and support for Grade R teachers (Andrich et al 2015: 1). This model has two great benefits: firstly, it points out the advantages of collaborations between government and training institutions, and, secondly, it emphasises the need to train pre-service and in-service teachers. It has been designed to benefit Grade R teachers so they can impart visual perceptual skills for early reading, but it is too vague to serve as a model that can specifically be used to prepare Grade R teachers to cope with the challenges of inclusive education.

The South African government recommends a model of Grade R teacher preparation that teaches skills, as well as “integrated and applied knowledge” to student teachers (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). Government recommends that five types of learning be incorporated in a Grade R teacher qualification: disciplinary learning, pedagogical learning, practical learning, fundamental learning and situational learning (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). Emphasis is placed on “learning from practice” and “learning in practice” (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). Similar to most models of teacher preparation, government recommends a model of “work-integrated learning” where emphasis is placed on practical experience as a means of gaining knowledge (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). “Work-integrated learning” requires that student teachers gain learning at training institutions, in school settings, as well as in community settings (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). This may be possible if collaborations are formed between education stakeholders (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). Government has compiled a list of competencies that a newly qualified Grade R teacher should possess. These competencies state that a newly qualified Grade R teacher should understand diversity in South Africa and identify learning and social problems, so they can address these problems in inclusive learning environments (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015).

Education is dynamic and it continues to change to keep up with changes in society; and the challenges in education continue to change and increase in intensity. Teacher training should continue to change as well, so teachers are able to keep up with the changes in education. For this reason, teacher preparation models need to change continuously. The above overview of teacher preparation models shows that different models of teacher preparation exist, and each model has its value and purpose in the unique learning environment for which it was designed. The findings in sections 2.2 and 2.2.3 showed that most countries use the additional model for teacher preparation for inclusion. The findings also showed various shortcomings in this model, which explains why Grade R teachers lack confidence as inclusive practitioners and find it difficult to cope as inclusive practitioners. The findings further revealed that countries that use the infusion model have more success with teacher preparation for inclusion. The infusion model would be more appropriate for Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education than the additional model. Stakeholders that design teacher preparation programmes could examine the needs of the education systems of their countries and explore innovative ways to infuse inclusive education into their teacher preparation programmes.

Something that most models have in common is that they promote “situated learning,” which aims to provide student teachers with practical training in inclusive settings. The overview of models for teacher preparation also points out the importance of collaborations between various stakeholders in the development of teacher preparation programmes, for example between governments as policymakers, and training institutions that develop teacher preparation programmes based on government policy guidelines. Schools can also be utilised as inclusive environments where student teachers can gain valuable experience. Few models are available to guide Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education though. The result of this situation is that training institutions rely heavily on general models of teacher preparation when they design Grade R teacher preparation programmes. This is problematic, because general models of teacher preparation are too vague to address the challenges that Grade R teachers face as inclusive practitioners. The frustration experienced by Grade R teachers as inclusive practitioners is further proof that existing models of teacher preparation are not effective. There is a need for more research and implementation of research findings to develop models that focus

specifically on Grade R teacher preparation, so the situation can improve. The present study is aimed at producing guidelines that could be used to develop new models for Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education.

2.5 SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT POLICIES THAT INFLUENCE GRADE R TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMMES FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

South Africa became a democratic country when the country had its first free national election in 1994. The new South African Constitution was developed to be the supreme law of the country (Republic of South Africa 1996). These developments in South Africa were in line with international practises of “equality and human rights” (UNESCO 1994; Engelbrecht et al 2016: 521). Education White Paper No. 6 (Department of Education White Paper No. 6 2001) is an example of a document developed to ensure that education would be inclusive and open to all people, including those with special needs (Department of Education White Paper No. 6 2001: 5). Teacher training is guided by policy, and when policies were changed to promote inclusive education, it meant that teacher training had to change as well, so teachers could be trained to cope as inclusive practitioners. To this effect, government developed policies that guided and influenced Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa (Department of Higher Education and Training. 2015: 57). The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development In South Africa is an example of government’s efforts to prepare Grade R teachers to meet the demands of inclusive education in the new, democratic South Africa (Department of Education 2006: 4). Despite all the good policies and efforts by government, challenges still remain in Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education (Department of Basic Education 2012: 1; Drake 2014: 196; Phasha 2010: 176; Engelbrecht, Nel, Smit, Van Deventer 2016: 532). The following overview of policies is aimed at providing more understanding of the connection between government policies and Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education.

The Department of Basic Education (2011) developed the Universal Access to Grade R: Policy Framework to identify existing policies, and to identify policy gaps related

to Grade R in South Africa. This policy document identifies Grade R teacher preparation as one of the pillars on which the programme to universalize Grade R is based (Department of Basic Education 2011: 4). Government aims to consolidate Grade R teacher preparation, and recommends that Grade R teacher preparation programmes should be offered by higher education institutions (Department of Basic Education 2011: 7). Government also recommends that FET colleges partner with higher education institutions to offer Higher and Advanced Certificates in Grade R practices (Department of Basic Education 2011: 7). This document is guided by the Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (Department of Basic Education 2011: 6; Department of Higher Education and Training, 2015). These policies and regulations are aligned with the Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF), which provides qualifications for Grade R teachers (Department of Basic Education 2011: 6; Department of Higher Education and Training, 2014). These policies are continuously being revised and adjusted so teacher education is in line with the changing needs of South African society (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 7). The Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications states that the Diploma in Grade R Practices should be used as the initial qualification for Grade R practitioners (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). The Higher Certificate and Advanced Certificate in Grade R Practices should serve as access qualifications for practitioners to enrol for the Diploma in Grade R Practices. These qualifications should provide access to the Bachelor of Education (Foundation Phase) qualification. Government states that Grade R teacher preparation courses should be structured so all Grade R teachers are “knowledgeable and skilled in the early identification of barriers to learning, as well as curriculum differentiation and adaptation for multiple learning needs” (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 53).

Government policies guide and regulate Grade R teacher preparation programmes offered by training institutions (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 57; Department of Basic Education 2011: 7). The Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications gives the policy requirements that training institutions should use when they design Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education (Department of Higher Education and Training

2015). Government requires that training institutions be accredited by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) to offer teacher preparation programmes (Department of Basic Education 2011: 7). Teacher preparation programmes must also comply with all the accreditation criteria and requirements of the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the CHE (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 57). In terms of the NQF Act, section 13(1)(h)(ii) training institutions should also apply to register their teacher preparation programmes with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) if these programmes meet the policy requirements and criteria for registration (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 58).

Based on the content of the policies, one can assume that learning environments are equal and inclusive and Grade R teachers, as inclusive practitioners, are equipped to provide learning opportunities to a diverse range of learners. The literature study reveals, however, that Grade R teachers are unable to cope as inclusive practitioners, and learners with diverse learning needs are experiencing educational inequalities (Engelbrecht et al 2016: 532). The literature study also reveals that Grade R teachers feel that teacher preparation programmes fail to prepare them to cope in the inclusive environment (See section 2.3.4.2). The brief overview of policies shows that policies are good in the sense that they promote the ideologies of democracy and equality of the new, democratic South Africa. The fact remains, though, that Grade R teachers are unable to cope with the challenges of inclusive education, and they have negative experiences with Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education, which show that challenges exist in the implementation of these policies (Engelbrecht et al 2016: 532).

Government is continuously “taking stock” of the implementation of policies and continuously providing guidelines and making recommendations to address the challenges in Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education (Department of Basic Education 2015(a): 36; Department of Basic Education 2015(b)). This “stocktaking” makes it possible for government to assess whether current developments are in line with long term plans for South Africa, for example the National Development Plan 2030 (NDP 2030) contains government’s long term goals to develop teachers’ skills and commitment (Department of The Presidency. 2012: 307). Government is exploring ways to achieve these goals, for example by finding

ways to improve teacher preparation and by working closely with stakeholders in education (Department of Basic Education 2015(a): 36; Department of Basic Education 2015(b); Department of Basic Education 2015(c)). One of the challenges of government policies, however, is that they are vague and do not give specific guidelines that might help to make the process of implementation easier. And it appears that policies are even more vague when it comes to providing guidelines for inclusive education and for Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. The above overview of government policies is far from exhaustive, but it points to a definite need for more research on this topic, and implementation of research findings, so the situation can improve.

2.6 SUMMARY

This chapter gives an overview of Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education on an international level. This approach gives a bigger, international perspective of Grade R teacher preparation, which helps to understand the context and effectiveness of Grade R teacher preparation in South Africa. The literature review indicates that the international trend is towards inclusive education practices. Governments put laws, policies and regulations in place to promote inclusive education, and Grade R teacher preparation programmes are being designed to fall in line with this trend.

The literature review reveals that Grade R teachers in almost all countries have positive and negative experiences with teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. Most teachers have negative experiences though, and they feel that Grade R teacher preparation programmes fail to prepare them to cope as inclusive practitioners. Teachers give various reasons for their negative experiences with Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education, including too little focus on content, inadequate knowledge, a lack of practical experience, and a lack of support. Canadian teachers are the exception; they have more positive experiences with implementing inclusive education than teachers in other countries (Sharma et al. 2006: 89). More research might provide findings to help understand the situation in Canada, so other countries could learn from the Canadian success story.

The literature review finds that inclusive education is relatively new in South Africa, which causes “teething” problems in the implementation of inclusive education. Government has developed various policies and regulations to guide the implementation of inclusive education and the development of Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. There are challenges though. This is evident in the negative experiences Grade R teachers have with Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. Even training institutions are experiencing challenges in the design and development of teacher preparation programmes.

As a means of further understanding Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa, a section of this chapter gives an overview of various models used to train Grade R teachers. The overview shows that most models recommend “situated learning,” where student teachers gain practical training in inclusive settings. Secondly, most models recommend that collaborations be formed between various stakeholders in the development of teacher preparation programmes, for example between the training institutions that develop teacher preparation programmes based on government policy guidelines and schools that provide inclusive environments where student teachers can gain valuable experience. The overview of models of teacher preparation shows that few models are available to guide Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. For this reason, training institutions rely heavily on general models of teacher preparation when they design Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. General models of teacher preparation are not effective, though, because they are too vague to prepare Grade R teachers to cope as inclusive practitioners, and Grade R teachers end up feeling frustrated and unprepared to cope as inclusive practitioners. There is a need for more research to develop new models focusing specifically on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education.

The next chapter discusses the theoretical framework that forms the basis of this study on Grade R in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework that forms the basis of this study on in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R. Following this introduction, the second section of the chapter defines the term “theory” and also provides insight into the importance of theory in a research study. In the third section, the researcher gives a brief overview of major theories that influence research in education. By giving an overview of major education theories, the researcher aims to put this study in context and eventually explain why Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model and the bio-ecological model were selected to form the theoretical basis of this study. The following sections focus on these models and explain why they are relevant to this study. In the last section of this chapter a summary is given of the main points raised in the chapter.

3.2 DEFINING THE TERM ‘THEORY’

Theory is “an idea or a set of ideas that is intended to explain facts or events” (Merriam-Webster). Merriam-Webster also defines theory as the general principles or ideas that relate to a particular subject.

De Vos and Strydom (2013:37) define theory as “an attempt to explain and/or predict a particular phenomenon.” Morgan (2007:49) defines a theory as the systematic principle(s) that are used to explain phenomena and can be verified by empirical investigations. Similarly, Slavin (2012:9) defines theory as a set of principles that explains and relates certain phenomena. In this study theory seeks to explain or describe in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R.

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:74) state that a theoretical framework provides a scholarly perspective on research and can be used to justify the selection of the

subjects, variables, and research design. They further state that “theory can show a logical link between questions and methodology” (2010:74). Higgs (2002:2) states that theory can be the products, i.e. principles, laws and explanations of theoretical enquiries. He adds that theory can also be the “framework in terms of which a particular theoretical or practical enterprise is carried out” (Higgs 2002:2). The researcher used theory for this present study to guide him in selecting a research design and methodology. This aspect will be revisited in Chapter 5 of the study.

Higgs (2002:2) states that theory can have two different meanings according to Western thought: firstly, theory can be a generalisation or a set of principles that can be used to “predict, control and dominate the world.” Secondly, he traces the meaning of theory back to Plato and states that theorising is a social process that enables us to understand ourselves and the social world we live in (Higgs 2002:2). Bush (2011:24) states that theory is “valuable and significant” and serves to explain and guide practice. He points out that theory is only useful if it is relevant to practice (Bush 2011:26). In line with these definitions, and based on the findings, this study could “guide practice” and add to existing knowledge to improve the situation and conditions for Grade R teachers in inclusive classrooms.

This study follows a qualitative approach, and the purpose is, therefore, not to propose or test theory, as in a quantitative study. In this qualitative study, theory is used to understand and explain Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education (Merriam-Webster; De Vos and Strydom, 2013:37; Morgan, 2007:49; Slavin, 2012:9; Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana 2010:60). This means that theory is used inductively (Newby 2010:119). Quantitative research, on the other hand, is more deductive and theories are “tested and validated as laws” (Newby 2010:119). The qualitative nature of this study will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 of this study.

Theory can also be used to make sense of issues of power and inequality in society (Daniels, Lauder & Porter (2009:3). Research has found that South Africa does not yet have a fully inclusive education system (Proudlock 2014:2). Grade R teachers need to be trained to become confident and competent inclusive practitioners, so they can accommodate learners with diverse learning needs (Phasha, Mahlo & Maseko 2013:89). In the present study, theory could be seen as a “lens” offering

insight and understanding on the way Grade R teacher preparation relates to issues of inequality in education (Daniels, Lauder & Porter 2009:3; Okeke 2014:7). Theory is used to “improve” Grade R teaching to “promote” learning in the inclusive classroom (Schunk 2012:18).

3.3 MAJOR THEORIES THAT INFLUENCE RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

This section gives a brief overview of theories that influence research in education. This overview helps to make sense of the ways in which theorists have sought to understand and explain education as a phenomenon (De Vos and Strydom 2013:37). By exploring the education theories, one gets an understanding of how learning takes place, and one gets an idea of what theories would be best to understand in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R. By approaching the study in this way, the researcher aims to put the study in context and show that Bronfenbrenner’s theory was selected to form the basis of this study because it is ideal to explore the experiences and perspectives of Grade R in-service teachers as role players in the education system.

Learning theories are commonly grouped according to the following three categories: behaviourism, cognitive constructivism and social constructivism (Woolfolk 2010:16; Davin, van Staden, & Janse van Rensburg 2013:50).

According to behaviourist theory, learning is a response to external stimuli (Woolfolk 2010:18). Learning is defined as a change of behaviour based on experience (Slavin 2012:116). Behaviour is changed by its consequences (Slavin 2012:119). Pleasant consequences strengthen and increase behaviour and learning, and unpleasant consequences weaken and decrease behaviour (Slavin 2012:119). Pleasant consequences are referred to as “reinforcers”, and unpleasant consequences are referred to as “punishers” (Slavin 2012:119). Operant conditioning uses pleasant and unpleasant consequences to change learning and behaviour (Slavin 2012:118). This learning theory suggests that pleasant consequences (reinforcers) strengthen learning and behaviour, while unpleasant consequences (punishers) weaken learning and behaviour (Morgan 2007:53).

According to cognitive constructivism, learning takes place through mental processes and the human mind processes information like a computer (Schunk 2012:165; Slavin 2012: 144). Unlike with the behaviourist theory, where the focus is on the outward exhibition of learning, cognitivist constructivist theory focuses on the internal processes that take place during learning (Schunk 2012:118; Woolfolk 2010:18). Changes in behaviour are observed in cognitivist constructivist theory, but only to understand the internal processes that take place during learning (Schunk 2012:118).

According to social constructivism, learning takes place in social contexts (Woolfolk 2010:18). Children learn when they are integrated into the community and through social interactions in the community (Schunk 2012:230). Social constructivism contrasts with behaviourism that places emphasis on the influences of the environment as well as with cognitive constructivism that places emphasis on learning as mental processes with little emphasis on the contexts in which learning takes place (Schunk 2012:231). Lev Vygotsky is known for his "zone of proximal development" concept (Morgan 2007:67). Vygotsky believed that a child's cognitive development is a social process that is influenced by interactions with peers or adults in their cultural or social environment (Beckley 2012 27). He was, however, unable to expand on his theories because he died at the young age of 38 years. Cultural–Historical Activity Theory is an example of a social constructivist theory that is being used more increasingly in research in inclusive education. Capability Theory is also being used more increasingly by researchers to relate research in inclusive education to issues of equality (Broderick 2018: 29).

3.4 ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY

Bronfenbrenner was a Russian-born American psychologist who developed the ecological systems theory (Beckley 2012:198). Bronfenbrenner developed this theory to explain the influence of a child's socio-cultural context or environment on their learning and development (Bronfenbrenner 1994; Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998).

3.4.1 Introduction

The ecological systems theory can be called a type of systems theory because it follows a systems approach to explain how different ecological systems influence a person's development (Bronfenbrenner 1994; Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998). It is very similar to Banathy's systems-environment model, and both theories view the education system in the context of its environment (Banathy & Jenlink 2004:48).

According to the ecological systems theory, development happens in four systems or structures: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem. These systems function in timeframes, which Bronfenbrenner refers to as the chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner 1994; Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998):

3.4.1.1 Microsystem

This system is the immediate environment of a person, i.e. where proximal interactions take place (Swart and Pettipher 2011:10; Donald et al. 2010: 40). In this system a person interacts with other people close to them, e.g. family, peers, colleagues. Interactions are continual and face-to-face, which makes this the most influential level in the ecological systems theory. "Microsystems involve roles, relationships, and patterns of daily activity that shape many aspects of cognitive, social, emotional, moral, and spiritual development" (Donald et al. 2010:40). In the school context, this is the place where Grade R teachers interact closely with Grade R learners. Grade R teachers are favourably positioned to identify learning challenges and put intervention strategies in place to promote inclusive education. Ideally, Grade R teacher preparation programmes should be designed so Grade R teachers can be empowered to understand the dynamics of the microsystem, as well as the important role they play in the microsystem.

3.4.1.2 Mesosystem

The mesosystem is where microsystems make contact or overlap (Swart & Pettipher 2011:11). This could be the place where partnerships exist between a school and the family of a learner. The school and the learner's family are two microsystems that

interact continuously, thereby influencing each other, and the development of the learner. Parents rely a lot on Grade R teachers to take the lead in forming and maintaining these partnerships. Research found that parents are generally unaware of the importance of early detection and early intervention for their children (Storbeck & Moodley 2011:5). In this context, the school becomes a very important part of a learner's life, and "the experience in the microsystem of the school can protect (the child) from the psychological effects of an unsupportive environment at home" (Swart & Pettipher 2011:11). The Grade R teacher is well positioned to serve on the school-based support team (SBST) and partner with parents to provide support for Grade R learners (Department of Education White Paper No. 5 2001:29). The mesosystem is similar to the microsystem in that both emphasise the importance of roles and relationships (Donald et al. 2010:40). Grade R teacher preparation programmes should be designed so Grade R teachers are prepared to fulfil their roles as inclusive practitioners and build positive and cooperative relationships in the mesosystem.

3.4.1.3 Exosystem

The exosystem refers to the environment where the Grade R teacher is not a direct participant, but decisions that are taken in this environment have an influence on the Grade R teacher (Donald et al. 2010:41). It could include school rules or education policies to which they are subjected. The exosystem could also include decision-making bodies, like the union that the Grade R teacher is a member of, or the Department of Basic Education that employs the Grade R teacher. In the context of this study, it could also include decision-making bodies at training institutions where decisions are made on how or if inclusive education components would be included in Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes. Inclusive education components should be relevant and meaningful to address the inclusive needs of learners with diverse learning needs. If decision-making bodies decide to include relevant inclusive components in their Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes, then Grade R teachers are better prepared to cope as inclusive practitioners in the school environment. If, on the other hand, those decision-making bodies decide not to include inclusive components in the Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes, then Grade R teachers find it difficult to cope as inclusive practitioners.

3.4.1.4 Macrosystem

Donald et al. (2010:41) state that the “macrosystem involves dominant social and economic structures, as well as values, beliefs, and practices that influence all other social systems.” Swart and Pettipher (2011:12) define the macrosystem as a person’s cultural environment “which may have an impact or be influenced by any of the above systems.” Examples of cultural environment include ideologies of freedom and the economy. In the South African context, the macrosystem consists of the post-1994 ideologies of freedom and equality which influence education policies, which in turn influence the design of Grade R teacher preparation programmes. This study will analyse government legislations and policies, like White Paper 6 (Department of Education 2001) to understand how these factors influence Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. South Africa is a developing country; this is another aspect of the macrosystem that influences Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The literature review in chapter 2 showed that developing countries are making more progress in developing Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education (See section 2.3).

3.4.1.5 Chronosystem

Chronosystem refers to “the developmental timeframes which cross through the interactions between these systems and their influences on individual development” (Swart & Pettipher 2011:12). This statement implies that systems change continuously over time. Many radical changes occurred in various aspects of society since the start of the new, democratic South Africa, and all citizens now have equal rights, which means all citizens should have equal access to education. This study will explore the “coevolutionary” relationship between society and the education system to understand how this aspect impacts Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education (Banathy 1988:198). This approach is based on the assumption that society and the education system evolve together over time, and Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes should evolve in parallel with society to be in line with socio-political changes in society.

In summary, in the context of this study, the microsystem could be the Grade R

classroom where the Grade R teacher interacts with diverse Grade R learners with diverse learning needs. This is the place where the Grade R teacher can identify learning challenges among Grade R learners and put intervention strategies in place to address these challenges and promote inclusive education. The mesosystem is the place where the microsystem of the school connects with the microsystem of the home; this is the place where Grade R teachers interact with the families of Grade R learners. This is where the Grade R teacher as an inclusive practitioner plays an important role to form partnerships between school and home to support the Grade R learners with their diverse learning needs. The exosystem includes the systems that the Grade R teachers are not directly involved in. The decisions taken at this level have an influence on the experiences of the Grade R teacher, for example the policy decisions taken by government that influence the design of Grade R teacher preparation programmes. This study will also explore the cultural environment of the macrosystem to understand how the macrosystem influences Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. These include aspects like the politics and social values of the society that influence Grade R in-service teacher training for inclusive education. The chronosystem refers to the time frames in which the systems function. This study will explore time frames related to Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education, for example how Grade R teacher programmes have evolved over time to keep up with the evolutionary processes of society and the education system. This is especially relevant because great socio-political progress has been made in South Africa since 1994, and one needs to consider whether Grade R in-service teacher preparation is in line with the socio-political development in South Africa.

3.5 THE BIOECOLOGICAL MODEL

The ecological systems model was later revised and renamed the bioecological systems model (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998). The 'bio-' aspect of the model refers to the biological selves that a person brings to the developmental process; and the ecological aspect refers to the social contexts in which development takes place (Woolfolk 2010:19). These aspects have a reciprocal influence on each other. Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model is a good theoretical framework for inclusive education, because it makes it easier for the Grade R teacher to understand

diversity, and provides insight into the developmental levels of the learners and the contextual influences on the learners' development (Bouwer 2011:50). Alant and Harty (2011:82) refer to Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model in their discussion on early childhood intervention, and emphasise the importance of the interaction between the three "environmental resources" of the child: i.e. family, community and classroom.

Davin et al (2013:33) also use Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model to explain human development. Bronfenbrenner identifies the following contextual factors that influence the child's development: person factors; process factors; context; and time (Davin et al 2013:33; Swart and Pettipher 2011:10). Davin et al (2013:56) point out that the Grade R teacher should be aware of all these factors and get to know their learners, so they can plan and present appropriate learning support for them. In line with the ideals of inclusivity, one could then argue that these factors are important enough to be included in Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. These factors highlight the importance of relationships in the inclusive learning environment, for example the relationships between Grade R learners and their parents, the relationships between Grade R learners and Grade R teachers, and the peer relationships between Grade R learners. In the context of this study, one could say that Grade R in-service teacher preparation should be structured in a way that takes the above factors into consideration, so Grade R teachers function as inclusive practitioners who understand learner diversity and diverse learning needs, and adapt their teaching practices to create inclusive classrooms that can accommodate all learners.

The contextual factors can be explained as follows:

3.5.1 Person factors (e.g. the temperamental features of a person)

These features are regarded as biological, and indicated by the name "bio-ecological" model (Swart & Pettipher 2011:14). The temperamental features of a person could have a positive or negative effect on proximal development (i.e. face-to-face, close communication between them). For example, feelings of shame could have a negative influence on the learning experience of a Grade R learner, while

feelings of belonging could have a positive influence. These different personal characteristics could cause learner diversity and affect the way learners learn. This situation points to a need for Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education, so Grade R teachers can cope as inclusive practitioners when faced with learner diversity.

3.5.2 Process factors (e.g. the forms of interaction that take place in the microsystem)

An example of process factors is the interaction that takes place between Grade R teachers and their learners when they teach their learners how to write. This interaction would vary from learner to learner because learner diversity determines what individual support a learner may require based on their diverse learning needs. These proximal processes operate over time, and may change depending on the changing needs of the Grade R learner. (Swart & Pettipher 2011:13).

3.5.3 Contexts (e.g. families, schools and local communities)

This refers to the school environment a Grade R learner enters when starting school or forming new friendships. Education White Paper No. 6 (Department of Education White Paper No. 6 2001) states that the school context should not be a barrier to learning, and identifies Grade R teachers as the “primary resource” to overcome barriers to learning to achieve the goals of inclusive education. The same paper further states that Grade R in-service teachers will need to be trained to cope with the challenges of the inclusive school context.

3.5.4 Time

This refers to changes over time as the learner or the environment matures (Swart & Pettipher 2011:10). The inclusive learning environment is influenced by various factors and the environment changes continuously. This situation points to a need for continued support and training for Grade R in-service teachers so they can cope with the challenges of the changing inclusive learning environment.

3.6 SUMMARY

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework that forms the lens for the study on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa. In section 3.2 the researcher defines the term “theory” and identifies theory as a “lens” that could offer insight and understanding of the way Grade R teacher preparation relates to inclusive education and issues of equality; theory could also be used to explore and “improve” Grade R in-service teacher preparation to “promote” learning in the inclusive classroom. In the following section is given a brief overview of major education theories to put the study in context. The researcher explains that Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory and his bio-ecological theory are used to guide the study, because these theories are ideal to explore the experiences and perspectives of role players on different hierarchical levels and environments of the education system. By using both theories, the researcher is able to gain valuable insight into Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education.

The next chapter discusses the research design and processes involved in addressing the research questions. The discussion includes the following aspects: research paradigm, research approach, population and sampling, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, trustworthiness of research and ethical considerations.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter four discusses the research design and processes involved in addressing the research questions. The following aspects are discussed: research approach, research paradigm, research design, population and sampling, data collection techniques, data analysis and interpretation, trustworthiness in qualitative research and ethical considerations.

According to Fouché and Schurink (2013: 323), research questions form the backbone of a research design, and a researcher should ensure that the research questions and the research design and methods are “compatible.” Furthermore, the researcher should be clear about how a selected research design and method will help to address the research questions (Fouché and Schurink 2013: 323).

This study is guided by the following research question:

How can Grade R in-service teachers be prepared to implement inclusive education?

The following sub-questions are relevant to the study:

1. What teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa?
2. What are the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa?
3. How do current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South African classrooms?
4. How could teacher preparation programmes be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education?

4.2 QUALITATIVE APPROACH

This study adopted a qualitative approach because the researcher wanted to obtain the lived experiences of Grade R in-service teachers with regard to Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 20), researchers can adopt quantitative, qualitative, mixed method, and analytic approaches in their research, with the first two being the most common. Fouché and Delport (2013: 63) state that each approach has its unique “purposes, methods of conducting the inquiry, strategies for collecting and analysing the data and criteria for judging quality.” O’Leary (2004: 11) points out that quantitative and qualitative actually refer to types of data, and not to methods. She explains that quantitative data are numerical data that can be naturally occurring numbers, e.g. age or income, or data that is numerically coded, for example, female = 1, male = 2 (O’Leary 2004: 11). She explains that qualitative data is collected as images or words, for example in interviews (O’Leary 2004: 11).

The data collection for this study is qualitative, and consists of interviews, observations and document analysis, with interviews as the main method of capturing the experiences of Grade R in-service teachers with regard to Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. This is in line with the constructivist paradigm of this study, which seeks to describe and interpret the “lived experiences” of Grade R teachers (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 346).

This study has the same characteristics as those of qualitative research as identified by Creswell (2007: 38):

Characteristics as identified by Cresswell (2007: 38)	Characteristics of this study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative data are collected in natural settings. • The researcher is a key instrument of data collection. • Multiple data sources are used. • In a qualitative study the researcher seeks to obtain the perspectives and views of the participants in their context of experiences. • The qualitative research process is emergent and may change. • Qualitative researchers often use a lens to view their studies. • Qualitative research is an interpretive inquiry, and people's interpretations are shaped by various factors, including their background and prior understandings. • Qualitative research aims to give a holistic view of social phenomena. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data are collected from Grade R teachers in natural school settings through interviews, observations and document analysis. • The researcher enters natural school settings for data collection and interacts with Grade R teachers as participants. • Interviews, observations and document analysis are used to collect data for this study. • The researcher explores Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education by exploring the experiences of Grade R teachers as inclusive practitioners. • The researcher accepts that the research design is emergent and may change when he enters the field to collect data. • System theory is the lens that the researcher selected for this study. • Multiple views of Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education can emerge because this study is open to the interpretations of the researcher, Grade R teachers and the readers of the research report. • The researcher aims to report the multiple perspectives that emerge from this study and to identify the many factors that influence this situation.

Figure 4.1: Characteristics of a qualitative study (Adopted from Creswell 2007)

According to Fouché and Schurink (2013: 308) the qualitative researcher aims to understand rather than explain. By following the qualitative approach that is given above, the researcher aims to gain a better understanding of Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education, and share his understanding with the reader. The following sections describe the methodology of the study in more detail.

4.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

This study used the constructivist paradigm, because constructivists regard knowledge as socially constructed and subjective (Guba and Lincoln 1994: 110; De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport 2013: 8; Wahyuni 2012: 71; Fouché and Schurink 2013: 310). Some researchers also define paradigm as a “philosophy of research” that is widely accepted by researchers (De Vos and Strydom 2013: 40; De Vos et al 2013: 513; Wahyuni 2012: 69). According to this definition, the paradigm that a researcher chooses is a reflection of their beliefs and interpretations of the world (De Vos et al 2013: 513; Levers 2013: 2; Wahyuni 2012: 69). Guba and Lincoln (1994: 105) define paradigm as “the basic belief system or worldview” that guides a researcher.

Guba and Lincoln (1994: 105) state that positivism, postpositivism, critical theory and related ideological positions, and constructivism are the four paradigms favoured by researchers when they conduct research. De Vos, Strydom, Schulze and Patel (2013: 5) distinguish between the following paradigms: positivist, postpositivist, interpretive, critical, feminist, postmodern, and constructivist.

4.3.1 The constructivist paradigm

As noted, the constructivist paradigm is suitable for this study. This paradigm is suitable for qualitative research, because constructivists see knowledge as socially constructed and subjective (Guba and Lincoln 1994: 110; De Vos et al 2013: 8; Wahyuni 2012: 71; Fouché and Schurink 2013: 310). Fouché and Schurink (2013: 310) state that “reality” is “socially and personally” constructed, and people can have different perceptions or interpretations about situations. Guba and Lincoln (1994: 111) state that different people can have “multiple” and “often conflicting” realities.

Constructivists also believe that “knowledge is “process, not a product” and a person’s “reality” can change over time as their experiences change (Guba and Lincoln 1994: 111; Plack 2005: 228). In a search for knowledge, it makes sense then that a study into a certain issue or phenomenon should seek to explore the “realities” or “lived experiences” of participants who are directly involved in the issue or phenomenon. For the present study, the researcher seeks to understand Grade R in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education. By exploring the “lived experiences” of Grade R teachers as inclusive practitioners, the researcher seeks to understand the preparedness of Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South Africa

In the constructivist paradigm, researchers acknowledge that participants are active and involved in the research process, and they seek to understand their world (De Vos et al 2013: 7). Guba and Lincoln (1994: 115) describe the researcher as a “passionate participant” who engages with other participants in the research study. For this study on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education, the researcher engaged with Grade R teachers as active participants and sought “understanding of the world in which they live and work” (Guba and Lincoln 1994: 115; De Vos et al. 2013: 7). The researcher strove to remain objective during the study, and engaged with the Grade R teachers as a data collector.

Guba and Lincoln (1994: 111) state that knowledge creation takes place when researchers and participants interact with one another. They further state that constructions are accepted as knowledge when those who are “competent” and “trusted” agree on the “substance” of the constructions (Guba and Lincoln 1994: 113). Because of their “lived experiences” as inclusive practitioners, the researcher acknowledges that Grade R in-service teachers are “competent” and “trusted” participants in this study on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education (Guba and Lincoln 1994: 111; Fouché and Schurink 2013: 310).

4.3.2 Ontology

A researcher selects a paradigm based on their ontological and epistemological views (Levers 2013: 2; Fouché and Schurink 2013: 310). The Merriam-Webster

online dictionary defines ontological as “relating to or based upon being or existence.” Ontology can also be defined as the way a person views reality (Wahyuni 2012: 69; Fouché and Schurink 2013: 310). For the present study the researcher acknowledges that the views Grade R teachers have of Grade R in-service teacher preparation are important in understanding Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.

4.3.3 Epistemology

Epistemological is defined as “the study or a theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge” (Merriam-Webster). Fouché and Schurink (2013: 310) define epistemology as “the rules by which they (researchers) believe reality should be known.” In the research context, ontology would refer to how the researcher sees reality, and epistemology would refer to how the researcher feels an issue or phenomenon should be studied (Fouché and Schurink 2013: 310). The researcher will use qualitative methods to collect data for this study. Interviewing, observation and document analysis are used as the central methods to collect data directly from Grade R in-service teachers. The qualitative nature of this study is discussed in more detail in the next section.

4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Various research designs are available for qualitative research. The qualitative researcher selects a specific research design that can help to answer the research questions and best achieve the aims of the study (Fouché and Schurink 2013: 312). The skills of the researcher and the resources available to the study are also factors that determine which research design is selected (Fouché and Schurink 2013: 312). Creswell (2007: 35) and Fouché and Schurink (2013: 312) identify narrative research, grounded theory, ethnography, case study and phenomenology as the five research designs most popular with qualitative researchers. This section gives a brief overview of these popular research designs and explains which research design has been selected for the study.

4.4.1 Phenomenology

A phenomenological study is conducted to describe and interpret participant perspectives of an event or phenomenon (Fouché and Schurink 2013: 316; McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 346). Data are collected by “naturally occurring interactions” or “unsolicited documents” (Fouché and Schurink 2013: 317). The phenomenological design was selected for this study. Based on the definition above, the event or phenomenon of this study is “In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R”. The participants of the study are Grade R in-service teachers. The researcher seeks to describe and interpret the Grade R teacher experiences of Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes. According to Bloor and Wood (2006: 128) the phenomenological researcher wants to describe, understand and interpret the meanings that people attach to their experiences. In line with this view, the researcher wants to describe, understand and interpret the meanings that Grade R teachers attach to experiences with Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. By focusing on the experiences of Grade R teachers, the researcher seeks to identify possible ways to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The researcher wants to describe, understand and interpret Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education, as seen through the eyes of Grade R teachers (Brink, van der Walt, van Rensburg 2012: 122). This design helps achieve the aims of the study and answer the main research question: How can Grade R in-service teachers be prepared to implement inclusive education?

4.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

4.5.1 Population

McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 129) define ‘population’ as a total group of elements or cases that conform to specific criteria. The population of a study consists of the persons, objects or events on which the research is focused (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 325; Strydom 2013: 223). O’Leary (2004: 102) states that a population is “the total membership of a defined class of people, objects, or events.” Population can also be referred to as the “target population” or the “universe” of the study (Strydom 2013: 223; McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 129). Brink et al. (2012:

131) define population as the entire group of persons or objects that the researcher is interested in. The population of this study are Grade R in-service teachers that offer instruction to Grade R learners. The Grade R teachers have been selected as the population because the researcher is interested in understanding their lived experiences as inclusive practitioners in this study on in-service Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education.

4.5.2 Sampling

The Merriam-Webster (2017) online dictionary defines sample as “a small part or quantity intended to show what the whole is like.” A researcher usually selects a sample of the population for data collection, because the population is quite large and it would not be feasible to collect data from all the members of the population (Strydom 2013: 224). The sample provides information that can help the researcher understand the population of a study and help answer the research questions (Strydom 2013: 224; Strydom and Delport 2013: 390). By planning the sampling process carefully, a researcher can concentrate all available resources on the sample group, which makes it possible to obtain information-rich data and produce quality research (Greeff 2013: 350, Strydom 2013: 224) The sample group can also be referred to as the “survey population” or the “sampling frame” (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 129).

Non-probability (‘purposive’) sampling was used to select the sample group. Non-probability sampling means that participant selection was not done randomly (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 136; Strydom & Delport 2013: 391). Purposive sampling is also referred to as non-probability sampling (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 138; Strydom & Delport 2013a: 392). This type of sample is based on the discretion and judgement of the researcher (Strydom & Delport 2013a: 392; Kumar 1999: 162). As a teacher, the researcher had knowledge about the population of the study, and he used purposive sampling to select Grade R in-service teachers from different schools that represent different socio-economic backgrounds to reflect the diversity of the population and obtain relevant data. The sample group for this study are Grade R in-service teachers who teach Grade R learners, and the Eastern Cape Province was selected as the site for the study. The site selection for this study is

influenced by the fact that the researcher is a teacher in the Eastern Cape Province and he can easily access various schools to collect data. The researcher also selected this site because a sufficient sample size was available for data collection. A sample size of 11 Grade R teachers was selected to provide “information-rich” data to answer the research questions posed. (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 324; Strydom 2013: 224). The Grade R teachers were approached via their school principals.

The researcher obtained permission from the head office of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDOE) to conduct the study. Section 4.9 explains the ethical aspects of the study and gives the steps followed to ensure that the participants did not experience any harm as a result of the study.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION

This phenomenological study employs qualitative data collection techniques to get a better understanding of Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. Interviewing, observation and document analysis were used to collect data, with interviewing as the central method of data collection (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 331). These data collection techniques were selected because they allow for data collection in a natural and unobtrusive manner (Creswell 2007: 38). Data saturation is also possible because data are collected to the point where no new, relevant data can be obtained (Greeff 2013: 350; McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 347). Another advantage of this multi-method approach is that it allows for data collection from both primary and secondary sources (Kumar 1999: 123). Interviewing and participant observations are classified as primary sources, and document analysis is classified as a secondary source (Strydom and Delport 2013b: 377).

4.6.1 Interviews

The researcher used the following steps, given by O’Leary (2004: 165) as a general guide for the interview process :

1. Plan for all contingencies.
2. Prepare an interview schedule and data recording system.
3. Make appropriate modifications to the process as required.

4. Do the interviews.
5. Analyze the data.

The phenomenological interview was used to collect data from Grade R teachers. McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 356) define a phenomenological interview as an in-depth interview that is used to study the “meanings or essence” of the lived experiences of selected participants. Semi-structured one-on-one interviews were conducted with Grade R teachers to obtain their insider views on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education (Greeff 2013: 351). Interviews were recorded in audio format and transcribed. The researcher used member checking during and after the interviews to measure the reliability of the instrument.

The interviews were structured to obtain data that could help answer the following two sub research questions:

- What are the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa?
- How do current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South African classrooms?

The interview questions also aimed to illicit suggestions from Grade R teachers based on the following sub research question: How could teacher preparation programmes be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education?

The interview guide approach was used and questions were prepared in advance so the interviews could have a guided, yet natural format. The researcher had the freedom to adjust the sequence and wording of the questions during the interviews, so the interviews could be conversational and situational (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 355). This approach was not too prescriptive, and the participants had the freedom to introduce issues that they thought were important and issues that the researcher was not aware of (Greeff 2013: 352). An interview schedule was used to obtain relevant data that could be used to answer the research questions (Greeff 2013: 352). The interview schedule was prepared beforehand and contained the interview questions and spaces for the interviewer to write participant responses.

The following logistical measures were adopted from McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 355):

Logistics	Measures taken
Identities	Grade R teachers were selected because they could provide information-rich data to help answer the research questions.
Number	Eleven Grade R teachers were selected because they would provide sufficient data to answer the research questions.
Setting	The Grade R teachers were interviewed in their classrooms and staffrooms at their schools, because they felt comfortable and at ease in these natural settings (Greeff 2013: 350).
Time	Interviews were conducted after working hours so the participants' work activities would not be disrupted. This proved to be good timing, because the schools were quiet and free from interruptions after hours (Greeff 2013: 350). Interviews were kept short, less than one hour, to ensure that participants did not become tired or bored.
Recording	Field notes were written during and immediately after the interviews to ensure that no information or impressions were forgotten (Greeff 2013: 359). Interviews were also recorded in audio format with the permission of the participants. The audio recordings gave the researcher a complete record of the interview that he could access after conducting the interview (Greeff 2013: 359).

Figure 4.2: Logistical measures for interviews (Adopted from McMillan and Schumacher 2010)

4.6.2 Observation

Observations are used by researchers to “see and hear” natural behaviour or events in a research setting (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 350). Observations were done in Grade R classes to corroborate the data obtained through interviews and document analysis. Observations were structured to help answer the sub research question: How do current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South African classrooms? The assumption was that the observation items would reveal any challenges Grade R teachers were experiencing. The Grade R classes were selected as ideal, natural

settings where the researcher could observe real life scenarios (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 209). The researcher took on the role of passive observer and wrote notes in an unobtrusive manner during observations (Kumar 1999: 105).

The researcher observed the availability and use of teaching resources, as well as the verbal and non-verbal behaviour of the Grade R teachers during their interaction with diverse learners in their classes (Strydom 2013: 335). The following items were observed:

1. The availability of teaching resources, including educational toys and books specifically designed to provide learning for learners with diverse learning needs.
2. The way teaching resources are applied to provide learning to learners with diverse learning needs.
3. The verbal interaction between teachers and learners, to observe whether teachers are comfortable and confident in the way they interact with learners with diverse learning needs, for example when they explain work during lessons.
4. The non-verbal interaction between teachers and learners, to observe whether teachers are comfortable and confident in the way they interact with learners with diverse learning needs, for example by the way they use non-verbal means to involve withdrawn learners in lessons.

The researcher used a specially designed template to write short, anecdotal notes as field notes during the observations (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 354). Member checking was done with the teachers after the observations to verify that the data were correct (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 331). The researcher visited the schools for observations over a one month period. The main factors contributing to this time frame were: firstly, the researcher did not want to intrude too much in the classroom activities; secondly, he did not want to influence the objectivity of the study by forming social relations with participants over a long period of time; and thirdly, there was no need to prolong the time in the field once sufficient data were collected to meet the objectives of the study.

4.6.3 Document analysis

Document analysis was used to explore government policies and guidelines on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. Strydom and Delport (2013b:

379) refer to these types of documents that are compiled and maintained by governments as “official documents.” Creswell (2003: 188) differentiates between private and public documents. South African government policies and guidelines are examples of public documents. The researcher accessed these policies and guidelines online on government websites to understand how the documents influence Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. This approach was adopted because the findings of the literature review showed that governments are major role players in Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education, and governments develop policies and guidelines that are used by training institutions to develop teacher preparation programmes. The document analysis provided valuable data to help answer the sub research question: What teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa? The researcher also analysed lesson plans of the teachers who participated in the study to understand how their lesson plans reflected inclusion of diverse learners with diverse learning needs. The lesson plans were analysed to understand whether teachers were trained to draw up lesson plans for inclusive education. The lesson plans were obtained from teachers after permission had been given by all relevant parties, including the district office, principals and teachers.

The following government documents were analysed:

- **The South African Constitution** (Republic of South Africa 1996)
- **Education White Paper 6** (Department of Education White Paper 6 2001)
- **The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development In South Africa** (Department of Education 2006)
- **Universal Access to Grade R: Policy Framework** (Department of Basic Education 2011)
- **Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF)** (Department of Basic Education 2011)
- **The Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications** (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015)
- **The National Development Plan 2030 (NDP)** (Department of The Presidency 2012)

4.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data analysis is an inductive process whereby data are organised into categories and the researcher identifies patterns and relationships among the categories (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 367). Inductive analysis can be described as the process used by the qualitative researcher to synthesize and make meaning from data. This is done by starting with specific data and ending with categories and patterns (McMillan & Schumacher 2010: 367). According to Creswell (2007: 38), qualitative data analysis is done “inductively, recursively and interactively.” Schurink, Fouché and de Vos (2013: 399) describe qualitative data analysis as a process of inductive reasoning, thinking, and theorizing. The aim with data analysis and interpretation is to produce findings that can help to answer research questions (Schurink et al 2013: 397).

McMillan & Schumacher (2010: 337) state that it is the duty of the researcher to explain which general analytical strategies were used for their study. This qualitative study on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education used the following analytical strategies, as recommended by de Vos (2010: 334 - 339) and Schurink et al. (2013: 403 – 419):

4.7.1 Planning for Recording of Data

The researcher should plan the data recording in advance, and data recording should be done systematically in a way appropriate to the setting and the participants. Advance planning is necessary to ensure that data recording and data analysis do not intrude on the flow of events in the research setting (Schurink et al. 2013: 404). The planning for this study included the use of an audio recorder for interviews with Grade R teachers in case the situation or setting made it difficult to write notes. Templates were prepared in advance to ensure that interviews and observations went smoothly and the researcher did not intrude too much in the research settings (Schurink et al. 2013: 404). Planning included the use of colour coded notes to keep track of dates and names of participants, so data could be retrieved for analysis (Schurink et al. 2013: 404).

4.7.2 Data Collection and Preliminary Analysis

The researcher followed a “twofold” approach to do data analysis for this study (Schurink et al. 2013: 405). According to this approach, data analysis firstly took place in the field while data were collected, i.e. during interviews, observations and document analysis; and, secondly, data analysis took place away from the field after data collection (Schurink et al. 2013: 405). Greeff (2013: 373) points out that data analysis begins by going back to the purpose of the study, and allowing the purpose of the study to drive the process of data analysis. By doing continuous data analysis, the researcher was able to reflect on the data collection procedures and make adjustments to ensure that these procedures were in line with the purpose of the study. The data analysis for this study was driven by the purpose of the study, as given in Chapter 1. The researcher was careful not to place too much emphasis on data analysis during data collection, so the analysis did not detract from the collection process (Schurink et al. 2013: 407).

4.7.3 Organizing Data

Intensive data analysis took place away from the research settings (Schurink et al. 2013: 408). Field notes were typed out and arranged in computer files, using Microsoft Word (Schurink et al. 2013: 408). Data were arranged according to the participants. Schools that were part of the study were assigned letters of the alphabet: Schools A to F. The Grade R teachers were assigned numbers 1 to 11. This helped to organise data into workable units so the researcher could understand it (McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 369). This approach helped to protect the privacy of the schools and the participating teachers. Copies of the data were stored away consistently for safekeeping during the time that data collection took place, and a working copy was used for analysis (Schurink et al. 2013: 408).

4.7.4 Reading and Writing Memos

The researcher read the data several times and wrote notes or memos to interpret and understand the whole, and to break the data into relevant parts to help answer the research questions and sub-questions (Schurink et al. 2013: 409). Most of the

notes for this study were written on the templates that were designed for data collection (See the addenda at the back of the thesis).

4.7.5 Generating Categories, Themes and Patterns

The researcher used the four research sub-questions as the preset themes of this study:

1. What teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa?
2. What are the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa?
3. How do current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South African classrooms?
4. How could teacher preparation programmes be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education?

The data were grouped into manageable themes, which helped to give direction to the process of data analysis (Schurink et al. 2013: 409).

4.7.6 Coding the data

Coding is the process of reading carefully through the data and dividing it into meaningful analytical units (Schurink et al. 2013: 411). The researcher used a number system identical to the numbering of the research sub-questions to sort the data into themes:

- Current Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education in South Africa
- The experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa
- The preparedness of Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South Africa
- Enhancing teacher preparation programmes to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa.

The data obtained from Grade R teachers during interviews, observations and document analysis were compared to identify duplication and overlapping, and

similar codes were grouped together (Schurink et al. 2013: 415).

4.7.7 Testing emergent understandings

During the process of searching for patterns and grouping data into themes, the researcher searched through the data to reveal contradictions and negative instances of the patterns and themes (Schurink et al. 2013: 415). This helped to determine how useful the data were in answering the research questions and meeting the objectives of the study.

4.7.8 Searching for alternative explanations

The researcher searched for other, plausible explanations for the patterns and themes in the data (Schurink et al. 2013: 415). This was done by engaging critically with the data and “challenging the very patterns that seem so apparent” (Schurink et al. 2013: 416). In this study the researcher looked for data that could provide alternative explanations for the challenges that Grade R teachers face in inclusive education.

4.7.9 Writing the report

The researcher aimed to give credibility to this qualitative report by including the following qualitative evidence:

- Quotations of Grade R teachers as participants.
- Quotations from policy documents relevant to teacher preparation for inclusive education.
- Appendices, including the letters of communication to stakeholders, the consent forms completed by stakeholders, the interview guide, the interview schedule, the observation template, the observation schedule, the template for document analysis and the transcribed data.

Section 4.8 gives more information on credibility and other criteria used to measure the trustworthiness of this study.

4.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Guba and Lincoln (1994: 114; 2001: 6) state that the trustworthiness of a qualitative study can be measured by the following criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These criteria are useful in guiding the methodological decisions made during the research process, and later in doing an audit of the process of the study (Guba and Lincoln 2001: 6). The researcher has put the following measures in place to ensure that this study is trustworthy (Guba and Lincoln 2001: 6; Schurink et al. 2013: 419):

4.8.1 Credibility

The goal with this criterion is to show that a study was conducted in a way that ensures that the findings are an accurate account of the phenomenon being researched (Guba and Lincoln 1994:307; Schurink et al. 2013: 420). The researcher increased the credibility of the study by using purposive sampling to select Grade R teachers from different schools representing a range of socio-economic backgrounds to reflect the diversity of the population and obtain relevant data to answer the research questions. Prolonged and persistent data collection was done in the field to ensure that sufficient data were collected from Grade R teachers. Extensive field notes were written and audio recordings were made to obtain accurate data. Member checking was done with teachers during and after data collection to ensure that the data were accurate. Quotations were included in the data. Credible data collection methods were used so the findings could be truthful, and the researcher searched for negative or discrepant data that contradicted emerging patterns of meanings.

4.8.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of one study can be transferred from one situation or case to another (Schurink et al. 2013: 420; Guba and Lincoln 2001: 6). Multiple data sources were used, including document analysis, interviewing and observation, which made it possible for the researcher to corroborate the data. The researcher also used accounts of field experiences during

data collection with teachers to make the study useful for other situations or cases (Schurink et al. 2013: 420). The measures listed have increased the transferability of this study. and policy makers and researchers can decide how and to what extent the study may be useful for their own situations or cases.

4.8.3 Dependability

Dependability is the extent to which the findings are consistent and could be repeated if the same research was conducted with similar participants under similar conditions. (Creswell 2003). Dependability also indicates whether a study is “logical, well-documented and audited” (Schurink et al. 2013: 420). This research report was submitted for examination by external examiners who “audit” the “record of the enquiry,” for example by examining the methodology that the researcher used and the reasons behind it (Schurink et al. 2013: 421). This ensures the dependability of the research process. The researcher also checked the findings of the study by verifying the interview data with the participants during and after data collection. The latter was done after the data were transcribed in electronic format. Participants were given copies of the transcribed data and asked to bring irregularities or false information to the researcher’s attention. No instances of irregularities or false information were reported to the researcher.

4.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability means the findings of the study are free from bias, to the extent that the findings can be confirmed by somebody other than the researcher (Schurink et al. 2013: 421; Guba and Lincoln 1994:308). The report is “audited” to determine whether the researcher provided sufficient evidence to corroborate the findings of the study (Schurink et al. 2013: 421). For this study, the researcher used “thick descriptions” and “audit trails” to achieve confirmability (Guba and Lincoln 2001: 6). He also made every effort to remain objective and unbiased; and he collected credible data that could be used as evidence to corroborate the findings of the study.

4.9 ETHICS IN RESEARCH

In the present context, ethics can be defined as the guidelines or sets of moral principles for good professional practices that steer researchers as they conduct their work (Bloor and Wood 2006: 64; Strydom 2013: 129). A researcher should give careful consideration to ethical issues from the start of the research process, even when selecting a research topic and writing a research proposal (Strydom 2013: 114). According to Guba and Lincoln (1994: 115) ethics is inherent to the constructivist paradigm. McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 338) state that qualitative research could be “personally intrusive”, and the researcher should, therefore, follow specific guidelines and adhere to research ethics to protect participants. Strydom (2013: 113) states that ethical issues can be “pervasive and complex” and the qualitative researcher should be aware of what is wrong and right in terms of research ethics. Furthermore, the close and personal interaction that takes place between participants compels the researcher to follow rules and ethical guidelines with issues of confidentiality and anonymity (Guba and Lincoln 1994: 115; McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 338). This study on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education was conducted according to the rules and ethical requirements of the University of South Africa (UNISA), and was guided by the following ethical principles:

4.9.1 Protection from harm

The first rule of ethical research is that the research should not cause harm to any of the participants (Strydom 2013: 115). The researcher planned and conducted this study so that the participants would not suffer any physical or emotional harm in any way. In the context of the study, the term ‘participants’ refers to Grade R teachers from whom primary data were collected to answer the research questions. The researcher respected the rights of the participants and made every effort to protect their interests at all times. To this end, the researcher maintained participant confidentiality and anonymity throughout the research process. The research report was released to the participants on completion of the study to confirm that ethical principles had been adhered to. As a participant in the study, the researcher also made sure that ethical decisions protected him from harm as well (Strydom 2013:

11). Due to the nature of the study, no vulnerable people or participants, for example young children, were included in the study.

4.9.2 Permission

The researcher approached various authorities for permission to conduct the research study (Strydom 2013: 126). The first step was to obtain permission from the research ethics committee of UNISA. This was done to ensure that the research was done according to the ethical rules and requirements of UNISA as an institution. The researcher then contacted the various authorities for permissions, including the authorities at the head office of the Eastern Cape Department of Education for permission to conduct the research study in the province. Written permissions were sought from Grade R teachers who participated in the study. These documents have been added as appendices to the report.

4.9.3 Voluntary participation

In this particular study, participation was voluntary and no one was forced in any way to participate in the study (Strydom 2013: 116). The researcher explained to the participants what the study was about, and explained that there would be no repercussions if they chose not to participate in the study (Strydom 2013: 117).

4.9.4 Informed consent

Participants have rights and they should always be given the opportunity to choose whether they want to be part of a research study (Strydom 2013: 117; McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 339). As noted, participation was voluntary, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Strydom (2013: 119) states that it is unethical of a researcher to deceive potential participants to get them to participate in a study. Potential participants were given accurate and complete information about this study, so they could decide whether they wanted to take part (Strydom 2013: 117). Potential participants were also given the opportunity to ask questions about the study, so they could have enough information to give informed consent. Written consent was obtained from the authorities and from participating

teachers to collect data through interviews, observations and document analysis. The signed consent forms were stored away safely by the researcher, so they would be available if needed for future reference.

4.9.5 Confidentiality

Confidentiality refers to the handling of data in a private and confidential way (Strydom 2013: 119). The researcher acknowledges that every person has a right to privacy, and he planned this study so there would be no violation of the privacy of any participant (Strydom 2013: 119). The data collected from Grade R teachers were treated with the strictest confidence, and notes and recordings containing their personal information were stored away securely. The researcher and the participants agreed that data would be used to meet the objectives of the study and would not be shared without their consent.

4.9.6 Anonymity

McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 339) state that the research setting and the participants should not be identifiable in the research report. The names of schools and teachers are withheld in this report to ensure their privacy (Strydom 2013: 120). As noted earlier, names were replaced with letters of the alphabet and numbers (see section 4.6 of chapter 4). The researcher also locked away all documents, notes and recordings that could reveal identities.

4.9.7 Professional honesty

There are many guidelines to promote ethical decision-making, but ultimately researchers make decisions based on their own professional honesty and integrity (Strydom 2013: 129). The researcher rates professional honesty highly, and set out to conduct this research with honesty and integrity. To this end, the study was conducted in a professional and honest manner, no data were fabricated, and the findings were reported in a truthful manner. The researcher also acknowledged all sources of information, i.e. by quoting the ideas or words of other researchers or organisations.

4.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter explains the methodology used to explore in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R. A qualitative, constructivist approach has been adopted. The researcher wanted to describe, understand and interpret Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education, as seen through the eyes of Grade R teachers, and he selected the phenomenological design for this purpose. The population used for the study were Grade R teachers, and a sample size of 11 such teachers was selected to provide “information-rich” data to answer the research questions. Interviews, observations and document analysis were utilised as data collection techniques. Data analysis and interpretation was an inductive process. The researcher put measures in place to ensure the study was trustworthy and ethically correct. The next chapter gives the presentation of the data and discussion of the findings.

CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The research design and processes of this study have been discussed in the previous chapter. The discussion included the following aspects: research paradigm, research approach, population and sampling, data collection techniques, data analysis and interpretation, trustworthiness of research, and ethical considerations. The research design and processes were guided by the aim of the study: to explore Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.

This chapter provides the presentation and analysis of data collected by means of interviews, observations and document analysis to answer the research question: How can Grade R in-service teachers be prepared to implement inclusive education? The following research sub-questions were addressed: What teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa? What are the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa? How do current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South African classrooms? How could teacher preparation programmes be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education?

Section 5.2 of this chapter provides a discussion of the qualitative methodology used for this study. The data analysis will be explained in section 5.3. The participant profiles will be given in section 5.4 so the reader can have a better understanding of the participants and the data collected from them. The presentation of the findings will be explained in section 5.5. Sections 5.6 to 5.9 present the findings of the study according to the themes, and section 5.10 gives a summary of the findings. Concluding remarks are offered in section 5.11.

5.2 QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

Qualitative analysis was used to transform data into findings. Large amounts of data were reduced by separating the significant from the trivial; then the researcher identified patterns in the data to find out what the data revealed about the research topic (Schurink, et al 2013: 397). The analytical strategies of de Vos (2010: 334 - 339) and Schurink et al. (2013: 403 – 419) were used as discussed in section 4.7 of chapter four.

5.2.1 Planning for Recording of Data

Planning for the study included the use of an audio recorder to record interviews with teachers in case the situation or setting made it difficult to write notes. Templates were also prepared in advance to ensure that data collection processes went smoothly and the researcher did not intrude too much in the research settings (Schurink et al. 2013: 404). Planning also included the use of colour- coded notes to keep track of dates and names of participants, so data could be retrieved for analysis (Schurink et al. 2013: 404).

5.2.2 Data Collection and Preliminary Analysis

The researcher followed a “twofold” approach to do data analysis. Data analysis firstly took place in the field while data were collected, i.e. during interviews, observations and document analysis; and, secondly, data analysis took place away from the field after data collection (Schurink et al. 2013: 405). The process of analysis was driven by the purpose of the study that was given in chapter one: to explore Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa. The researcher conducted continuous data analysis, enabling him to reflect on the data collection procedures and make adjustments to ensure that the procedures were in line with the purpose of the study. The researcher was careful not to place too much emphasis on analysis during data collection, because he did not want the analysis to interfere with the data collection process (Schurink et al. 2013: 407).

5.2.3 Organizing Data

Intensive data analysis was conducted away from the research settings, and field notes were typed out and arranged in computer files, using Microsoft Word (Schurink et al. 2013: 408). Schools and teachers were assigned letters of the alphabet and numbers, as noted earlier. Copies of the data were stored for safekeeping during the data collection process, and a working copy was used for analysis (Schurink et al. 2013: 408).

5.2.4 Reading and Writing Memos

The researcher read the data several times and wrote memos to get a sense of the whole and to break the data into relevant parts to help answer the research questions and sub-questions (Schurink et al. 2013: 409). Most of the notes for the study were written on the templates that were designed for data collection. (See the addenda.)

5.2.5 Generating Categories, Themes and Patterns

The researcher derived the themes from the research questions of the study:

1. What teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa?
2. What are the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa?
3. How do current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South African classrooms?
4. How could teacher preparation programmes be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education?

The data were grouped into manageable themes, which helped to give direction to the process of data analysis (Schurink et al. 2013: 409).

5.2.6 Coding the data

The researcher used a number system identical to the numbering of the research sub-questions to sort the data into themes. The data obtained during interviews, observations and document analysis were compared to identify duplication and overlapping, and similar codes were grouped together (Schurink et al. 2013: 415).

5.2.7 Testing emergent understandings

During the process of searching for patterns and grouping data into themes, the researcher searched through the data to reveal contradictions and negative instances of the patterns and themes (Schurink et al. 2013: 415). This helped to determine whether the data were useful to answer the research questions and meet the objectives of the study that were given in chapter one of this thesis.

5.2.8 Searching for alternative explanations

The researcher searched for other, plausible explanations for the patterns and themes in the data. He did this by engaging critically with the data and “challenging the very patterns that seem so apparent” (Schurink et al. 2013: 416). In this study the researcher looked for data that could provide explanations for the challenges faced by Grade R teachers in inclusive education.

5.2.9 Writing the report

The researcher aimed to give credibility to the report by including qualitative evidence:

- Direct quotations of Grade R teacher responses.
- Information from policy documents relevant to Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.
- Various appendices, including the letters of communication to stakeholders, the consent forms completed by stakeholders, the interview guide, the interview schedule, the observation template, the observation schedule, the template for document analysis and the transcribed data.

Section 4.8.1 of chapter four provides more information on credibility and other criteria that were used to measure the trustworthiness of this study.

5.3 DATA ANALYSIS

McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 329) note that data collection and analysis occur in interwoven, overlapping cycles. Schurink et al (2013: 397) describe data analysis as a process that separates relevant from irrelevant data to identify patterns in the data to produce findings to help answer the research questions. Their strategies for qualitative data analysis were discussed in section 4.6 of chapter 4.

The following is an overview of the process of data analysis.

- The researcher planned for the systematic recording of data. This included the selection of note-taking and audio recording as data-recording strategies appropriate for the research settings and participants (Schurink, et al 2013: 404).
- Data analysis took place during and after data collection. The teacher responses were analysed during the interviews to determine whether the data were relevant to answer the research questions. The researcher conducted more in-depth analysis of data between visits to the field and after completing the data collection. Schurink, et al (2013: 405) refer to this as “the office approach” because data are interpreted and sorted away from the field.
- The data were arranged in tabular format after completion of the collection process. This was done by listing the questions asked, and giving the responses of each teacher next to the questions. The information was captured in Microsoft Word, and a backup copy was stored for safekeeping.

A number system identical to the one used in the sub-questions was used to group the teacher responses according to the themes. Their responses were compared to identify duplication and overlapping, and similar responses were grouped together (Schurink, et al 2013: 412, 413). The data were examined to reveal contradictions and negative instances of the themes. This was done to determine how the data could be used to answer the research questions

(Schurink, et al 2013: 415). The data were also examined critically to find alternative explanations that could add new meanings or even challenge the researcher's understanding of the data on Grade R in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in South Africa (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 380; Schurink, et al 2013: 416).

5.4 PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Table 5.1 provides a summary of the participants in the study. Eleven Grade R teachers were selected from six primary schools in the Grahamstown district in the Eastern Cape Province to take part in the study. Purposive sampling was used to identify teachers at schools in different socio-economic areas to obtain sufficient data to understand the population of the study and address the research questions (Greeff 2013: 35; Strydom 2013: 224, 232). In terms of representativeness, the three dominant cultural groups of the area are represented in the sample group (Strydom 2013: 223, 226). Xhosa, Coloured and White Grade R teachers participated in the study. The participants were experienced Grade R teachers, selected because they could provide information-rich data for the study (Strydom 2013: 224). The number of participants selected was "sufficient" to reflect the population of the study and provide "data saturation" to answer the research questions (Greeff 2013: 350). The information in Table 5.1 was obtained from the participants after they agreed to be part of the study. The researcher respected the professional honesty and integrity of the participants and did not ask them to provide documentary proof of the information they gave. The researcher included in Table 5.1 information that was relevant to the study and omitted any personal information that could compromise the privacy and anonymity of the participants.

SCHOOL	PARTICIPANT AND AGE	TEACHING QUALIFICATION	GRADE R TEACHING QUALIFICATION	TOTAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE (YEARS)	GRADE R LEVEL TEACHING EXPERIENCE (YEARS)
School A	Teacher 1, 44 years	National Professional Diploma: Education (NPDE) (lev.6)	National Professional Diploma: Education (NPDE) (lev.6)	5	5
School A	Teacher 2, 53 years	National Professional Diploma: Education (NPDE) (lev.6)	Diploma in Early Childhood Development (ECD)	23	9
School B	Teacher 3, 45 years	Bachelor of Education (BEd) (Foundation Phase) (lev.7)	National Professional Diploma: Education (NPDE) (lev.4)	15	15
School C	Teacher 4, 46 years	Matric + Further Education and Training (FET) certificate in Foundation phase (lev.4)	Matric + Further Education and Training (FET) certificate in Foundation phase (lev.4)	10	8
School C	Teacher 5, 42 years	Bachelor of Education (BEd) (Foundation Phase) (lev.7) and National Professional Diploma: Education (NPDE) (lev.4)	Early Childhood Development (ECD) lev.1,2,3 training	23	15
School D	Teacher 6, 55 years	Diploma in Education (Pre- Primary) (lev.6)	Diploma in Education (Pre- Primary) (lev.6)	25	25

		Dip. In Special Education (lev.6)	Dip. In Special Education (lev.6)		
School D	Teacher 7, 53 years	Matric + 3 short courses (general education)	Matric + 3 short courses (general education)	23	23
School E	Teacher 8, 51 years	National Professional Diploma: Education (NPDE) (lev.6)	Certificate in Early Childhood Development (ECD) (lev. 4)	16	16
School F	Teacher 9, 50 years	Certificate in Early Childhood Development (ECD) (lev.5)	Certificate in Early Childhood Development (ECD) (lev.5)	25	4
School F	Teacher 10, 60 years	Certificate in Early Childhood Development (ECD) (lev.5)	Certificate in Early Childhood Development (ECD) (lev.5)	25	15
School F	Teacher 11, 41 years	Certificate in Early Childhood Development (ECD) (lev.5)	Certificate in Early Childhood Development (ECD) (lev.5)	9	6

Table 5.1: Participant profiles

Teacher 1 was 44 years old during the study. She has five years total teaching experience and five years Grade R level teaching experience. She obtained the National Professional Diploma: Education (NPDE) (lev.6).

Teacher 2 was 53 years old during the study. She has 23 years total experience and nine years Grade R level teaching experience. She obtained the National Professional Diploma: Education (NPDE) (lev.6) and the Diploma in Early Childhood Development (ECD).

Teacher 3 was 45 years old during the study. She has fifteen years total teaching experience and fifteen years Grade R level teaching experience. She obtained the

Bachelor of Education (BEd) (Foundation Phase) (lev.7) and National Professional Diploma: Education (NPDE) (lev.4).

Teacher 4 was 46 years old during the study. She has ten years total teaching experience and eight years Grade R level teaching experience. She obtained the Matric + Further Education and Training (FET) certificate in Foundation phase (lev.4).

Teacher 5 was 42 years old during the study. She has 23 years total teaching experience and fifteen years Grade R level teaching experience. She obtained the Bachelor of Education (BEd) (Foundation Phase) (lev.7) and National Professional Diploma: Education (NPDE) (lev.4) and Early Childhood Development (ECD) lev.1,2,3 training.

Teacher 6 was 55 years old during the study. She has 25 years total teaching experience and 25 years Grade R level teaching experience. She obtained the Diploma in Education (Pre-Primary) (lev.6) and the Dip. In Special Education (lev.6).

Teacher 7 was 53 years old during the study. She has 23 years total teaching experience and 23 years Grade R level teaching experience. She completed Matric and 3 short courses (general education).

Teacher 8 was 51 years old during the study. She has sixteen years total teaching experience and sixteen years Grade R level teaching experience. She obtained the National Professional Diploma: Education (NPDE) (lev.6) and the Certificate in Early Childhood Development (ECD) (lev. 4).

Teacher 9 was 50 years old during the study. She has 25 years total teaching experience and four years Grade R level teaching experience. She obtained the Certificate in Early Childhood Development (ECD) (lev.5).

Teacher 10 was 60 years old during the study. She has 25 years total teaching experience and fifteen years Grade R level teaching experience. She obtained the Certificate in Early Childhood Development (ECD) (lev.5).

Teacher 11 was 41 years old during the study. She has nine years total teaching experience and six years Grade R level teaching experience. She obtained the Certificate in Early Childhood Development (ECD) (lev.5).

All the participants were female. Their ages were 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 50, 51, 53, 53, 55, and 60 years. All were experienced teachers, with their Grade R teaching experience ranging from four to twenty-five years. Three indicated that they completed the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE); five completed the certificate in Early Childhood Development (ECD); one completed Matric and a Further Education and Training (FET) certificate in Foundation Phase teaching; one completed Matric and three short courses in general education; one completed a Diploma in Pre-primary Education and a Diploma in Special Education.

The eleven Grade R in-service teachers in Table 5.1 were selected because they could provide information-rich data to help answer the research questions (Greeff 2013: 350). The data collection methods were selected to collect data that could specifically help answer the research questions.

The researcher viewed the Grade R teachers as knowledgeable experts in their field, and based on their lived experiences, they were well-positioned to provide valuable data to answer the research questions (Greeff 2013: 352). He collected data to understand the “meanings or essence” of their lived experiences as selected participants (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 356).

The researcher approached the Grade R teachers via their principals a month prior to data collection to: introduce himself to them, explain the study to them, and establish a relationship of openness and trust with them (Greeff 2013: 350, 351; McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 329). This allowed them sufficient time to decide on their availability for the study and think of suitable times and venues for data collection (Greeff 2013: 350). They were given consent forms to complete when they agreed to be part of the study.

Field notes were written in the field, and these were followed up with well-written notes immediately after the interviews to ensure that no information or impressions

were forgotten (Greeff 2013: 359). Field notes were typed out and stored safely in computer files, using Microsoft Word (Schurink et al. 2013: 408). The researcher used the time away from the field to reflect on the interview process, he also wrote entries in a reflexive journal as an additional record of the data collection process (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 334).

The researcher spent a month in the field collecting data from all the participants; a field log was maintained during this time to provide a chronological record of dates, times, names of places, names of people and contact details that were relevant to the process of fieldwork (McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 334). This log was kept safely and securely to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of all persons involved in the study (Strydom 2013: 119, 120).

The following section provides the interview questions put to the teachers, and their responses. The transcribed interview data with the direct words of the respondents have also been added as an addendum to this thesis.

5.5 PRESENTATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

The data collection and analysis were aimed at exploring Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa. The objectives were:

1. To explore what teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa.
2. To find out the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa.
3. To investigate how current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South Africa.
4. To explore how teacher preparation programmes could be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education.

The researcher employed qualitative methods to collect and analyse data from Grade R in-service teachers using interviewing, document analysis and

observations. The methods and rationale have been discussed in detail in chapter 4.

The results and analysis are presented according to the themes:

Theme 1: Inadequate Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education

Theme 2: Insufficient translation of theory into practice

Theme 3: Insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources

Theme 4: Infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education

5.6 INADEQUATE GRADE R IN-SERVICE TEACHER PREPARATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

5.6.1 Introduction

The research question that provided data concerning current Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education is: What teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa? The findings reveal that government is striving to establish an inclusive education system in South Africa, and various policies and guidelines have been put in place to train and support Grade R teachers for inclusive education.

5.6.2 Interviews

In interview question 3 the researcher asked the participants if they felt current Grade R teacher preparation programmes were adequate to train teachers to teach learners with diverse learning needs. The majority of the participants responded that current Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education was not adequate.

Teacher 2 responded that current teacher preparation programmes were not adequate because the classroom situation was difficult. She said that more training was needed and that training should be continuous, even annual: *"It's not enough,*

more training is needed because the situation is not okay, and training is needed continuously, every year.”

Teacher 4 supported the view of Teacher 2 and responded that the training was inadequate and more training was needed, especially in special needs, so teachers could be equipped to teach learners with special needs: *“I don’t think the training is enough; more training is needed, especially in special needs. Teachers need to be equipped to teach learners with special needs.”*

Teacher 3 said that it depended on where a student teacher is trained. She explained that she studied at two universities and found that their courses differed; she felt that the second university offered better training because they focused a lot more on practical skills than the first university: *“Not really, it depends on which college or university they attend. I studied at two universities and found that their courses are different; the second university I attended offered better training because they focused a lot more on practical skills than the first university.”*

Teacher 9 responded that training was adequate for some teachers because they were trained to deal with learners with special needs, but other teachers did not get the same training and they needed help from remedial teachers: *“Some teachers got training to deal with learners with special needs, but some did not get the training and they need help from remedial teachers.”*

Based on these responses, one can conclude that Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education is inadequate. The findings of the literature review in chapter three also showed that the majority of teachers in various parts of the world felt that teacher preparation programmes did not prepare them adequately for inclusive education.

5.6.3 Document analysis

The findings of the literature review in chapter three showed that government and training institutions are major role players in Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education, and government develops policies and guidelines that are used

by training institutions to develop Grade R teacher preparation programmes (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 55; Department of Basic Education 2011: 7).

According to the ecological systems theory, these bodies function in the exosystem (See 3.4 of chapter 3). Document analysis gave the researcher a glimpse into the exosystem where decisions are made that affect Grade R teachers and Grade R teacher preparation. Strydom and Delport (2013b:376) define document analysis as “the analysis of any written material that contains information about the phenomenon that is being researched.” They classify document analysis as a secondary data source, and interviewing and observations as primary sources (Strydom and Delport 2013b: 377). The researcher conducted an analysis of government documents to understand what the official requirements are for current Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education, and to gain understanding of Grade R teacher preparation programmes that are currently available. The analysis of government documents also helped to understand what guidelines are available to guide Grade R teachers to do lesson planning for inclusive education. The government documents that were selected are described as public, official documents (Strydom and Delport 2013b: 377; McMillan and Schumacher 2010: 361). The researcher easily obtained these documents from government websites. According to Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) documents, Grade R in-service teachers should be trained in inclusive education, but based on the teacher responses to interview question 3, it is clear that Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes do not adequately prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education.

Education policymakers used the South African Constitution to guide policy decisions and developments. These developments in South Africa were in line with international practises of “equality and human rights” (UNESCO 1994). Ecological systems theory refers to this as the macrolevel (See 3.4 of chapter 3). The macrosystem influences policy decisions that are made in the exosystem. To this effect, the South African government developed policies that promote equality and human rights, and these policies guide and influence Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa (Department of Higher Education and

Training. 2015: 57). The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development In South Africa is one such policy that government developed to prepare teachers to meet the demands of inclusive education in the new, democratic South Africa (Department of Education 2006: 4). The Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications provides the policy requirements that training institutions should currently use when they design Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). Government regulations also require that training institutions be accredited by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) to offer teacher preparation programmes (Department of Basic Education 2011: 7).

The researcher analysed the following government documents for this study:

- **Education White Paper 6** (Department of Education White Paper 6 2001)
- **Universal Access to Grade R: Policy Framework** (Department of Basic Education 2011)
- **The Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications** (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015)
- **Guidelines for Inclusive Learning Programmes** (Department of Education 2005)
- **Grade R Resource Kit 2015** (Department of Education 2015)

5.6.3.1 Education White Paper 6

Education White Paper 6 identified teachers as the most important “resource” to achieve the government’s goal of establishing an inclusive education system (Department of Education White Paper No. 6 2001: 18). This document stated that “The norms and standards for teacher education will be revised where appropriate to include the development of competencies to recognise and address barriers to learning and to accommodate the diverse range of learning needs” (Department of Education White Paper No. 6 2001: 5). The Paper identifies the important role of district support teams to provide pre-service and in-service training programmes and support services for teachers so they would be able to cope as inclusive practitioners (Department of Education White Paper No. 6 2001: 29). It is further stated that

teacher training programmes are to develop specialized competencies, including life skills, counseling and learning support in Grade R teachers (Department of Education White Paper No. 6 2001: 5). These aspects show government's aim is to establish Grade R teacher preparation programmes that prepare Grade R teachers to cope with the challenges of inclusive education.

5.6.3.2 Universal Access to Grade R: Policy Framework

Government developed the Universal Access to Grade R: Policy Framework in 2011 to identify existing policies and to identify policy gaps related to Grade R in South Africa (Department of Basic Education 2011: 3). This document identifies Grade R teacher preparation as one of the pillars on which the programme to universalize Grade R is based (Department of Basic Education 2011: 4). Government identified that Grade R teachers had various qualifications, and set out to consolidate Grade R teacher preparation by proposing that the Diploma in Grade R Practices become the initial Grade R teacher qualification (Department of Basic Education 2011: 6). The Higher Certificate and Advanced Certificate were proposed as access qualifications for current Grade R teachers (Department of Basic Education 2011: 6). It is also proposed that Grade R teacher preparation programmes be offered by higher education institutions, and FET colleges should partner with higher education institutions to offer Higher and Advanced Certificates in Grade R practices (Department of Basic Education 2011: 7). This document focuses on various aspects of Grade R: legislation and policies, curriculum, teacher training, teacher employment, funding, and monitoring and evaluation. The shortcomings of this document, however, are that it does not elaborate on the inclusivity aspects of Grade R, and it neglects to propose strategies or guidelines for Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. This leads one to ask what role and purpose this document has in the building of an inclusive education system and the training of Grade R teachers as inclusive practitioners. It also prompts one to wonder whether sufficient thought has been given to inclusive education at a practical level.

5.6.3.3 The Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications

The South African government recommends a model of Grade R teacher preparation that teaches skills, as well as “integrated and applied knowledge” to teachers (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). Government recommends that five types of learning be incorporated in a Grade R teacher qualification: disciplinary learning, pedagogical learning, practical learning, fundamental learning and situational learning (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). Emphasis is placed on “learning from practice” and “learning in practice” (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). Similar to most models of teacher preparation that were explored in chapter 3, government recommends a model of “work-integrated learning” where a lot of emphasis is placed on practical experience as a means to gain knowledge (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). “Work-integrated learning” requires that teachers gain learning at training institutions, in school settings, as well as in community settings (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). This can be possible if collaborations are formed between the stakeholders that were listed (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). Government also compiled a list of competencies that a newly qualified Grade R teacher should possess (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). These competencies state that a newly qualified Grade R teacher should understand diversity in South Africa and identify learning and social problems, so they can address these problems in inclusive learning environments (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). The Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications stated that the Diploma in Grade R Practices be used as the initial qualification for Grade R practitioners (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). This is similar to the guidelines in The Universal Access to Grade R: Policy Framework (Department of Basic Education 2011: 6). The Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications identified the Diploma in Grade R Teaching and the Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase Teaching as qualification types for Grade R teaching (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 53). The Higher Certificate and Advanced Certificate in Grade R Practices serve as access qualifications for practitioners to enrol for the Diploma in Grade R Practices (Department of Higher Education and

Training 2015: 49). These qualifications provide access to the Bachelor of Education (Foundation Phase) qualification (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 51). This policy places high emphasis on the need for work-integrated learning (WIL) and states that a full-time student teacher should spend between 12 and 18 weeks in formally supervised and assessed school-based practice during the three years of their diploma (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 53). In a part-time or distance course students may be physically in schools for longer periods, for example when they are employed as unqualified or under-qualified teachers (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 53). The policy further states that Grade R teacher preparation programmes should be structured so all Grade R teachers are “knowledgeable and skilled in the early identification of barriers to learning, as well as curriculum differentiation and adaptation for multiple learning needs” (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 53). Teacher preparation programmes must also comply with all the accreditation criteria and requirements of the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 57). In terms of the NQF Act, section 13(1)(h)(ii) states that training institutions should apply to register their teacher preparation programmes with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) if these programmes meet the policy and criteria for registration (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 58). The policy requires that newly qualified teachers be inclusive practitioners who understand diversity in the South African context, so they are able to include diverse learners with diverse learning needs in their classrooms (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 64). They must also be able to identify learning needs and collaborate with professional service providers to address those learning needs (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 64). The analysis of this policy showed that government is moving in the right direction to implement inclusive education and provide guidelines for Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. The analysis also shows that government is putting measures in place to ensure that all institutions design their Grade R teacher preparation programmes according to the guidelines of this policy (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 58).

Despite all the good policies and efforts by government, the literature review in chapter three showed that challenges still remain in Grade R teacher preparation for

inclusive education (Department of Basic Education 2012: 1). Based on the data, it appears that government is putting good measures in place to regulate Grade R teacher training, for example by requiring that training institutions register their teacher preparation programmes with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). One of the challenges with government policies, however, is that they are vague and do not give specific guidelines for implementation. And the data show that policies are especially vague in giving guidelines for the implementation of inclusive education and for Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. This situation points to a need to explore the implementation of the policies with the aim of identifying the factors that make them vague and difficult to implement. The questions to consider would be: What are the factors that make the policies vague and difficult to implement? In what ways could the implementation of the policies be enhanced? As a precursor to the analysis of Grade R teacher plans, the researcher will now explore government documents that were developed to guide Grade R teachers in designing lesson plans.

5.6.3.4 Guidelines for Inclusive Learning programmes

Following the launch of Education White Paper 6, government developed the Guidelines for Inclusive Learning Programmes in 2005 (Department of Education 2005). These guidelines were developed to guide teachers to deal with learner diversity in the classroom (Department of Education 2005: 7). Section two of this document discussed adaptation of learning programmes, work schedules and lesson plans (Department of Education 2005). The guidelines state that lesson plans should be adapted to meet the diverse learning needs of all the learners in the class (Department of Education 2005: 31). To that effect, the lesson plans should show differentiated teaching, differentiated activities and differentiated assessments (Department of Education 2005: 31). Ongoing diagnostic assessment is needed so the teacher is able to do support planning and directional assessment (Department of Education 2005: 31). Grade R teachers should ask themselves the following three questions as part of the process of lesson planning and differentiation: “How can I differentiate and/or adapt the content and/or context and scaffold the assessment standards so that it will be relevant to the life experience and level of competence of individual learners?” “What differentiations and/or adaptations need to be made to

the learning and teaching support material (LTSM) and how can the method of presentation be differentiated and/or adapted?” “What needs to be taken into consideration to assess a learner’s performance?” (Department of Education 2005: 32, 33). Various practical guidelines are given to Grade R teachers, for example time allocation for activities should be flexible and adapted to the needs of individual learners (Department of Education 2005: 35). Despite all the good efforts by government, the interviews revealed that Grade R teachers have negative experiences as inclusive practitioners. Grade R teachers also identified various challenges they were experiencing; including challenges to accommodate learners with diverse learning needs. These findings were similar to that of the literature review (See section 2.3.4.2 of chapter 2). The observations showed, however, that they were able to accommodate learners with different learning needs in their lessons (See chapter 5). The researcher identified a discrepancy between the findings of the interview data and the observation data. This points to a lack of self-confidence that Grade R teachers have in their abilities as inclusive practitioners.

5.6.3.5 Grade R Resource Kit 2015

Government provided Grade R resource kits in 2015 to assist and guide Grade R teachers with lesson planning (Department of Basic Education 2015e). The kits contained theme-based lesson plans that covered a forty-week period. The lesson plans included the following aspects: outcomes, activities, resources and assessments (Department of Basic Education 2015e). The lesson plans also contained assessment tasks and checklists and rubrics for learner evaluation (Department of Basic Education 2015e). A Grade R teacher’s guide was included in the kit so Grade R teachers would not have difficulties when implementing the kit (Department of Basic Education 2015f). This guide contained a section entitled “Accommodating learners with barriers in the Grade R classroom,” which was aimed at helping Grade R teachers understand learner diversity, so they could do lesson planning to accommodate learner diversity (Department of Basic Education 2015f). Despite the importance that the DoE places on lesson planning to accommodate learner diversity, the document analysis showed that there was no planning for learner diversity in the lesson plans of the Grade R teachers that participated in this study. This points to a need for adequate Grade R in-service teacher preparation

programmes, even programmes that include a component that trains Grade R in-service teachers to do lesson planning to accommodate learner diversity.

5.6.4 Concluding remarks about inadequate Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education

The data analysis of the documents and guidelines in section 5.6.2 showed that government is striving to establish an inclusive education system in South Africa, and various policies and guidelines have been put in place to train and support Grade R teachers for inclusive education. The guidelines and policies also serve to guide training institutions when they design Grade R teacher training programmes for inclusive education. These findings are in line with the findings of the literature review that showed that governments all over the world have put policies and guidelines in place to promote inclusive education, and training institutions are using the policies and guidelines to decide what should be included in their Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education (See chapter 2). All these findings are also in line with the theoretical framework for this study, which was discussed in chapter 3. Ecological systems theory states that government and training institutions make decisions in the exosystem (See 3.4 of chapter 3). The Grade R teacher in the microsystem of the school is indirectly affected by decisions that are made in this environment, because these decisions determine the nature of the teacher preparation programmes to which he/she is exposed. In the context of this study, one could say the decisions that are taken in the exosystem influence Grade R teacher preparation programmes, and the Grade R teacher preparation programmes affect the Grade R teachers' ability to cope as inclusive practitioners in the microsystem of the school. Challenges in the implementation of inclusive policies in the microsystem could point to a need to explore the policy-decisions that are made in the exosystem. This affirms Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory which places emphasis on the collaborative aspect of the various systems that make up the education system.

5.7 INSUFFICIENT TRANSLATION OF THEORY INTO PRACTICE

5.7.1 Introduction

The previous section showed that government and training institutions are making steady progress to develop Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education, but there is insufficient translation of theory into practice during the preparation of Grade R teachers so that they can cope as inclusive practitioners (Walton et al 2014: 321). The research question that provided data concerning the experiences of Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education is: What are the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa?

5.7.2 Literature review

The literature review showed that, globally, teachers had both negative and positive experiences with teacher preparation for inclusive education, but most teachers had negative experiences (See 2.3 of chapter 2). The teacher preparation programmes failed to provide them with knowledge and practical experience to cope as inclusive practitioners. The literature review showed that the situation was the same in South Africa, where teachers indicated they lacked knowledge and skills to cope as inclusive practitioners (See 2.3 of chapter 2).

Walton (2015: 175) states that it is important to get “insider perspectives” and listen to the “voice” of the teacher when exploring inclusive education. Walton et al (2014: 319) found that many South African teachers feel they need more knowledge and skill to cope with the challenges of inclusive education. One of the reasons for this situation is that many teachers were trained before 1994, when racial inequality and educational inequality existed in teacher preparation (Walton et al 2014: 321). Fortunately, the document analysis in the previous section (section 5.6 of this chapter) revealed that government is working to address this issue, and has developed policies and guidelines aimed at equipping teachers with knowledge and skills for inclusive education. Walton et al (2014: 319) wanted to find out if these efforts were successful, so they conducted research at a full service school to obtain the views of teachers who attended a workshop to equip them for inclusive,

“multilevel” teaching. Teachers felt the workshop was not effective and they were unable to implement inclusive strategies after the workshop due to “various contextual and systemic constraints” (Walton et al 2014: 328). They felt that one workshop was not enough, and indicated that ongoing, school-based support would help them cope with the challenges of inclusive education (Walton et al 2014: 330). Heeralal and Jama (2014:1507) conducted a study to explore the implications of inclusive education in the Eastern Cape. They found that teachers lacked knowledge and skills in inclusive education because they had limited exposure to practical situations during teacher preparation programmes and workshops. They reported that schools in their study were not functioning effectively as inclusive schools, and teachers needed more workshops, practical exposure and continued support from the Department of Education (Heeralal and Jama 2014: 1507).

Although few studies have been done on the experiences of Grade R teachers, one can conclude that Grade R teachers generally have negative experiences of Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. The literature review showed that Grade R teachers want teacher preparation programmes to be structured in a way that can equip them with the knowledge and skills needed for inclusive education. They also want ongoing support after teacher preparation programmes and workshops have ended.

5.7.3 Data from the interviews

Interviews were conducted with Grade R in-service teachers to explore their experiences with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education (See 5.4 of this chapter).

The following question was posed to participants in the interviews: What is your understanding of the term “inclusive education”? The correct interpretation of the concept ‘Inclusive Education’ will enable Grade R in-service teachers to embrace all learners in their classes regardless of their different characteristics. Their responses to interview question 1 showed that Grade R teachers in the sample group had a mixed understanding of the term “inclusive education,” and they were not confident about the meaning of the term.

Teacher 1 responded that inclusive education is to include herself and her learners in her work. She explained that, as an inclusive practitioner, she should put herself in the lesson and form part of the lesson to help learners with special needs: *“My understanding of inclusive education is to include myself first as a whole in my work and the learners also. I put myself in the lesson and form part of the lesson, for example to help learners with speech problems who have special needs”*.

In her response, Teacher 3 said that inclusive education is to include all subjects so a learner can learn about everything. She explained that inclusive education means to develop different aspects, for example a learner’s motor skills, social skills and emotional skills: *“Inclusive education in Grade R is to include all subjects so a child can learn about everything, so his fine motor skills, gross motor skills and all those aspects are developed. Inclusive education also means to develop social and emotional skills, sometimes as a teacher you are not sure whether you are doing the correct thing or not.”*

Teacher 4 explained that inclusive education means to include stakeholders or role players in education, for example the Department of Education and people with knowledge of a specific phase. She explained that all people must be included in the children’s learning and work together to improve the quality of education: *“I think it means that people must be included in education, for example the Department of Education. People with knowledge, for example in foundation phase must all be included in the children’s learning and do the same thing so they can boost the quality of education but it is difficult to do it in class.”*

Teacher 7 responded that inclusive education is the education that she was presently implementing and the syllabus she was following, as instructed by the Department of Education: *“It’s the education that we are doing in class, as instructed by the Department of Education, but most of the time they do not demonstrate how to do it, that means to follow the syllabus.”*

Based on the responses, one could assume that they did not attend intensive teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. Alternatively, it could mean that they attended teacher preparation programmes, but they require more teacher

preparation programmes to improve their understanding and confidence with regard to inclusive education and require more practical examples. One could assume that they would be more familiar and more confident with the terms if they had attended teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education which included experiential learning. The fact that they gave different answers shows that the terms mean different things to them, and they grapple to make sense of inclusive education. This could be presented as further evidence that they have not attended Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. The teacher responses point to a need for more knowledge, training and support to cope as inclusive practitioners. This correlates with the findings of the literature review in chapter 2, which showed that most teachers, nationally and internationally, lacked confidence with regard to inclusive education, and needed more knowledge, on the job training and support to cope as inclusive practitioners.

The responses to interview question 2 showed that all of the teachers understood the meaning of the term “diverse learning needs.” They also gave examples of barriers to learning that their learners were experiencing, and many of them suggested strategies to teach learners with diverse learning needs, for example Teachers 2 and 11 suggested that Grade R teachers should have patience when interacting with learners with diverse learning needs.

Teacher 2 said that learners are unique and different, for example some are quiet and have unique learning challenges. She added that teachers need to love them, this must be seen in the way they practice inclusive education in real life situations and be patient and calm: *“Learners are different, teachers need to love them and be patient and calm, this must be seen in the way they practice inclusive education in real life situations. Learners are unique, for example some are quiet and have unique problems.”*

Teacher 11 responded that one of her learners had muscle problems and moved at a slow pace, and another learned at a slow pace. She said that teachers should know what to do with learners with diverse learning needs: *“One of my learners has muscle problems and moves at a slow pace, another one learns at a slow pace. One must be patient with them and have a skill to assist them.”*

These responses showed that they were able to identify learners with diverse learning needs in their classes, despite their lack of confidence in their own abilities as inclusive practitioners but they lacked the knowledge and skill of dealing with those kind of problems.

For interview question 3, most Grade R teachers responded that current Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education was not adequate.

Teacher 7 responded that current teacher training programmes do not have a practical component; it is as if the trainers themselves do not know how to translate the theory into practice. She explained that student teachers learn at training institutions how to teach, but in the class they have to do it practically, and they have to adapt their teaching when they find that children have special needs: *“No, I don’t think so. At the university they learn how to teach, but it is as if the trainers themselves do not know how to turn theory into practice, and then teachers have to do it practically and find that children have special needs and they have to adapt their teaching.”*

Teacher 10 said that the training programmes were not preparing teachers for real life situations because teachers did not know what was going on in the classroom: *“Teachers can’t cope because they don’t know what’s going on in the classroom.”*

Teacher 11 also said that the training programmes were not translating theory into practice, and she added that teachers did not know what was going on in class because they did not get classroom experience during their training: *“No, they don’t really know what’s going on in class because they don’t have classroom experience.”*

The responses point to a need for Grade R in-service teacher preparation where teachers learn inclusive skills in real classroom situations.

The findings of the literature review showed that the situation was the same internationally, and most teachers in various parts of the world felt that teacher preparation programmes did not prepare them adequately to cope as inclusive practitioners (See 2.3 of chapter 2). The literature review also showed that the South African government is aware of these experiences of Grade R teachers in South

Africa, and The Department of Higher Education and Training (2015: 53) stated that Grade R teacher preparation courses should be structured so that all Grade R teachers can acquire knowledge and skills for early identification of barriers to learning, so they can support learners with diverse learning needs (See section 2.3 of chapter 2).

Grade R teachers in the sample group responded that they experienced challenges in their classrooms. The challenges included language diversity, age diversity, overcrowding, lack of resources and lack of parental involvement. Their responses show they need more or enhanced teacher preparation programmes so they can cope with the classroom challenges and so they can cope as inclusive practitioners.

Teacher 3 explained that language was a challenge because her learners come from diverse homes where they speak different languages; she added that approximately 95% of her learners speak isiXhosa and the medium at the school was Afrikaans. She added that she could speak a bit of isiXhosa which helped her to communicate and teach her learners. She also said overcrowding was another challenge; and she was alone with 40 learners, which made it difficult to give individual attention to each learner. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that her learners did not learn at the same pace. She indicated that thirty learners would be easier to teach: *“Language is a challenge because my learners come from different homes where they speak different languages, approximately 95% of my learners speak Xhosa, but the medium of instruction at the school is Afrikaans, fortunately I speak a bit of Xhosa and we are able to communicate and learn together. Overcrowding is another challenge, I’m alone with 40 learners, and it’s very difficult to give individual attention to each learner, especially when one considers that learners do not learn at the same pace. Thirty learners would be more manageable, so how do you deal with that situation of overcrowding because you need to teach the class.”*

Teacher 11 agreed with Teacher 10 that overcrowding was a challenge and said it was difficult to control the huge number of learners in her class. *“Overcrowding makes it difficult to control children.”*

5.7.4 Document analysis

The MRTEQ shows that the DoE recommends a model of Grade R teacher preparation that teaches skills, as well as “integrated and applied knowledge” to teachers (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). The DoE recommends that five types of learning be incorporated in a Grade R teacher qualification: disciplinary learning, pedagogical learning, practical learning, fundamental learning and situational learning (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). A lot of emphasis is placed on “learning from practice” and “learning in practice” (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). The overview of models of teacher preparation in chapter 2 showed that the DoE want teachers to do experiential learning and do practical teaching. This means teachers should gain learning at training institutions, in school settings, as well as in community settings (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). This may be possible if collaborations are formed between education stakeholders (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). The DoE also compiled a list of competencies that a qualified Grade R teacher should possess. These competencies state that a qualified Grade R teacher should understand diversity in South Africa and identify learning and social problems, so they can address these problems in inclusive learning environments (Department of Higher Education and Training 2015). Despite the progress in developing guidelines for Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education, the findings of this study reveal that Grade R teachers are unable to cope as inclusive practitioners. This points to insufficient translation of theory into practice.

The Guidelines for Inclusive Learning programmes that were discussed in this chapter indicate that Grade R lesson plans should reflect how the Grade R teacher plans to practically accommodate the diverse needs of all the learners in the class (Department of Education 2005: 31). The researcher analysed the lesson plans of the Grade R teachers who participated in this study to understand how their lesson plans accommodate the diverse needs of the learners in their classes. This data would help answer research question 3: How do current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South African classrooms? The assumption here is that a lack of practical inclusive

strategies in lesson plans shows lack of teacher knowledge, which could point to challenges in Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education.

The findings of the literature review in chapter 2 showed that Grade R teachers are not prepared to implement inclusive education. The findings of the interviews reported in this chapter are in line with the findings of the literature review. The findings of the observations that were conducted show, however, that Grade R teachers are able to adapt their teaching and include diverse learners in their lessons. The findings of the analysis of teacher lesson plans revealed that they were not prepared to implement inclusive education.

The analysis of the Grade R teacher lesson plans showed that all the teachers in the sample group had lesson plans and they were able to design lesson plans. The researcher observed, however, that most teachers did not include the outcomes and assessments in their lesson plans. Only Teachers 5 and 6 had a lesson plan that contained all the essential elements or sections that are needed for a complete lesson plan. The researcher also found that most teachers used a “one size fits all” lesson plan, and only Teacher 10 included strategies to deal with diverse learner needs in her lesson plan. And while their lesson plans did not show clear strategies to include diverse learners with diverse learning needs, all teachers relied on their skills and experience to adapt their teaching to include all learners in their lessons. The teacher lesson plans showed they were not prepared to implement inclusive education. Based on the actual classroom teaching that the researcher observed, all the Grade R teachers were able to adapt their teaching to accommodate learners with diverse learning needs. One can conclude that the Grade R teacher classroom teaching showed that they were prepared to implement inclusive strategies, but that was not indicated and reflected in their lesson plans. This shows that they are able to prepare lessons on paper but the practical translation of what is written on paper to practice was lacking.

5.7.5 Observation

The findings of the observation contradicted the findings of the interview data and

showed that Grade R teachers were able to interact in various verbal and non-verbal ways with diverse learners with diverse learning needs. The teachers were trying their best to improvise to implement inclusive strategies in their teaching to cope with learner diversity, overcrowding and other challenges, which suggests that they were able to cope as inclusive practitioners. Teachers 1, 3 and 8 moved a lot from table to table and gave attention to a small group of learners at a time, which left the majority of learners unattended and rowdy. The researcher observed a lack of individual interaction in the classrooms, and a lack of practical, hands-on interaction, which shows that Grade R in-service teachers lack the practical component as inclusive practitioners. This points to a need to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes with a strong practical component so Grade R in-service teachers can learn skills to cope with overcrowding and other challenges of inclusive classrooms.

5.7.6 Concluding remarks about insufficient translation of theory into practice

The findings revealed that the Grade R teachers were not confident to translate the theory that they have learnt into practice when they were faced with real classroom situations.

The majority of them indicated that current Grade R teacher preparation programmes are not adequate to prepare Grade R teachers for dealing with real problems that the learners encounter in classes, and they indicated that they need practical examples during the training to cope as inclusive practitioners. These sentiments are echoed in the words of Teacher 6: *“Grade R teachers have many challenges in the classroom, for example overcrowding, but they are not getting sufficient pre-service and in-service training and support to cope with these challenges.”* These findings are in line with the findings of the literature review, which showed that teachers all over the world had similar experiences regarding translating theory into practice (Peebles and Mendaglio 2014: 245; Sharma et al. 2009: 321; Kuyini and Mangope 2011: 31; Heeralal and Jama 2014: 1507). Based on the findings, one can conclude that a need exists to enhance Grade R teacher preparation programmes so teachers are able to cope as inclusive practitioners. There is need to include practical components in Grade R in-service teacher preparation in order for Grade R in-

service teachers to cope with learners with diversity in their classrooms. The findings of the observations show that Grade R in-service teachers are innovative and they try their best to cope as inclusive practitioners, but the practical component is missing.

The Grade R teacher responses to the interview questions also point to a need to address Grade R teachers' confidence in their abilities as competent and knowledgeable inclusive practitioners. Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model refers to self confidence as 'person factors' that can impact the 'process factors.' In the context of this study, it means that the lack of self-confidence (person factors) of the Grade R in-service teacher could have a negative impact on their ability to cope as inclusive practitioners in the interactions that take place between them and their learners in the microsystem of the classroom (process factors).

5.8 INSUFFICIENT KNOWLEDGE ON THE USE OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES

5.8.1 Interviews

The findings reveal that Grade R in-service teachers have insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources for inclusive education. When asked about ways to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education, Teacher 2 said that Grade R teachers need to learn strategies to use resources effectively: *"Teachers should be trained to use different strategies to teach learners with special needs, for example using music and games to teach."* Teacher 4 indicated there is a need for more training to use resources effectively for inclusive education: *"Training should be practical, and teachers should be trained to use resources effectively."* These findings are in line with the findings of the literature review on the experiences of teachers globally. Teachers in India felt that teacher preparation programmes should include information on the use of resources that are available to teach diverse learners (Sharma et al. 2009: 327). They believed inclusive practitioners would be more self-confident if they were able to use resources effectively as inclusive practitioners. The findings of the literature review showed that teachers feel unprepared as inclusive practitioners (Peebles and Mendaglio 2014: 245; Sharma et al. 2009: 321; Kuyini and Mangope 2011: 31). The findings of the interviews were in line with the findings of the literature review; this was similar to what was observed.

5.8.2 Observations

The researcher observed that the DoE provided various resources for Grade R classes, but teachers sometimes lacked the knowledge and skill to use the resources. There were a number of resources in all the classrooms. This presence of diverse resources would be an indication that the Grade R teachers had adequate teacher preparation and, based on their teacher preparation, they should be able to select and provide resources to teach diverse learners with diverse learning needs. The absence of diverse resources would be interpreted as an indication that Grade R teachers are unable to select and provide diverse resources because they have not received practical training on how to use the resources in Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. All classes had basic resources, for examples DOE (Department of Education) workbooks and crayons, but the observations showed that some classes had a greater variety and number of resources than others, because they were financially empowered to acquire such resources. The researcher also observed that learner numbers were different in the Grade R classes. Some classes had forty or more learners, which often resulted in shortages of resources in those classes.

It was observed that overcrowding was still a problem. At school 1, the Grade R class had 54 learners, there was inadequate space to sit as the structure of the class was too small and the researcher ended up standing next to the door. The teacher could not use the available teaching resources because the space was too small. At School 2 the class was reasonable with 38 learners, but the furniture especially the tables were not enough to accommodate all learners. Some of the learners were doing their work on the carpet and some of the resources needed a table to be able to function adequately. On the contrary it was observed that School 4 was a very well-resourced class, the resources included: a piano, tv, dvd player, building blocks, clothes, helmets, puzzles, and so forth. The Grade R teacher had 30 learners in the class, and she was able to use the resources correctly because she had a teacher assistant and the classroom was spacious. At School 6, Teacher 11 had the following resources: a felt board with material pictures and numbers, a flipchart, DOE workbooks, crayons, paints, brushes, blocks, etc. She had good resources, and she tried her best to cope but the large number of learners was overwhelming, and some

learners became disinterested and rowdy during the lesson. She needs training to use the resources for inclusive education.

Teacher 1 had various resources in her classroom, including DOE workbooks, crayons, paints, brushes, hoola hoops, etc. Learning space was arranged in ten groups with four learners per group. The class appeared well resourced and resources were neatly organised.

Teacher 2 had various resources, including DOE workbooks, crayons, paints, brushes, aprons, posters, a birthday chart, hoola hoops, etc. There was seating for forty learners. The classroom appears well resourced with resources that are suitable for Grade R learners. The diversity of resources could be well utilised to teach learners with diverse learning needs but the researcher observed that learners who were struggling were not given the necessary attention, for example the hoola hoops could be effective for activities outside the classroom and development of gross motor skills.

Teacher 3 had various resources, including workbooks, reading books, crayons, clay, posters, puzzles, lego blocks, an abacus, an old computer, etc. The learning space was arranged in five groups with eight learners per group. The resources appear to be under-utilised because the class was overcrowded, and the teacher had limited time to use the resources and interact with individual learners. The learners mostly interacted among themselves when the teacher was attending to a different group. This clearly shows how difficult it was for the teacher to handle a large class, she was taught to group learners in her teacher preparation but not taught how to manage a large class, this translates well into the insufficient training on translating theory into practice.

This data correlates with the data collected in the interviews which showed that overcrowded classrooms were a challenge for many Grade R teachers. The researcher also observed that the huge numbers of learners in those classes made it difficult for the teachers to use resources to interact with learners individually. Based on the observations that were made for observation item 1, the researcher concluded that teachers are able to provide diverse resources to teach diverse

learners with diverse learning needs. This is an indication that they have been prepared to practically select and provide diverse resources for diverse learner needs.

The observations showed that all teachers used a lot of verbal interaction in their teaching. Verbal interactions were mostly loud and repetitive, because teachers spoke often, and learners repeated words or numbers loudly. In overcrowded classes learning was often so loud that it was difficult for teachers to keep track of learner involvement and learner responses. This sometimes resulted in withdrawn or slower learners being “left behind” when the whole class interacted with the teacher at one time. The researcher also observed that a lot of the verbal interaction between teachers and learners took the form of reprimands, which the teachers used to maintain order in overcrowded classes. Teachers 4, 7 and 10 spoke calmly to their learners and had more successful interaction with them than teachers who were reprimanding their learners continuously. The researcher further observed that learners responded well when verbal interaction was in their mother tongue. Based on the data collected, one can conclude that the Grade R teachers are able to use verbal interaction effectively to teach diverse learners with diverse learning needs, for example Teachers 3, 6, 7 and 8 used code switching to ensure that all learners were able to understand them during verbal interaction. One can conclude that Grade R teacher preparation was effective to equip Grade R teachers with good verbal strategies, which they were able to use to accommodate learners with diverse language needs.

The observations showed that all the Grade R teachers used non-verbal interaction in their lessons. In some classes, non-verbal strategies included the use of pictures and music. All teachers were able to identify learners who were not participating during activities, and assisted them by demonstrating the activities to them, for example correct grip of the scissors to cut paper. Learners appeared to respond very well to non-verbal interaction, which makes that a valuable teaching strategy to accommodate diverse learners with diverse learning needs in inclusive classrooms. The researcher observed that overcrowded classrooms were hives of activity and the teachers had limited opportunity for interaction with individual learners. Peer learning proved very useful in those situations, and learners were able to interact

among themselves and work together when the teacher was not available for individual interaction. Based on the data collected, one can conclude that Grade R teachers are able to use non-verbal interaction in their lessons to accommodate learners with diverse learning needs in their classes. One can conclude that Grade R teachers are adequately prepared to use non-verbal interaction to accommodate diverse learners with diverse learning needs.

The observations showed that teachers were prepared to accommodate diverse learners with diverse learner needs in their current classes. This finding is in contrast with the findings of the literature review, which showed that the majority of Grade R teachers all over the world, including in South Africa, are not prepared to cope as inclusive practitioners (Peebles and Mendaglio 2014: 245; Sharma et al. 2009: 321; Kuyini and Mangope 2011: 31; Heeralal and Jama 2014: 1507). During the interviews the Grade R teachers said that they needed more classroom experience with more exposure to diverse learners to cope better as inclusive practitioners (see 5.8.2 of this chapter). This shows that both their training and their classroom experience were important influences on their ability to cope as inclusive practitioners. The literature review in chapter 2 showed that the situation is the same in most of the countries in the world. The researcher observed that no Grade R classes in the present study had learners with severe or extreme learning needs that required extreme intervention, with the result that the researcher was unable to observe the teachers interact with learners with severe or extreme learning needs. Based on this observation, the researcher is unable to state conclusively that the teachers are prepared to accommodate all learners, including those with severe or extreme learning needs, in their classes.

To summarise, the observations gave the researcher a glimpse into the microsystem where Grade R teachers and Grade R learners have close interaction. The observation data show that teachers appear to be adequately prepared to implement inclusive education because they are able to cope with learner diversity in their classrooms although most of the time the practical component was lacking. The interviews showed, however, that most of them appear to doubt their own ability to cope as inclusive practitioners.

During the observations, the researcher identified various issues that were beyond the control of the Grade R teachers. These included overcrowding and limited resources and facilities. The teachers identified these as challenges that can only be addressed by the DOE. Based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, the DOE makes decisions about those challenges in the exosystem (See chapter 3). The teacher is not a participant in the exosystem, and therefore does not have any decision-making authority when decisions are made on that level. And while this study focuses on Grade R teacher preparation, the researcher recognises that challenges like overcrowding and limited resources and facilities cannot be addressed by Grade R teacher preparation programmes, but Grade R teacher preparation programmes with a practical component can be designed to empower Grade R teachers with skills to cope as inclusive practitioners when they face these challenges.

5.8.3 Concluding remarks about insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources

The analysis of data collected from the interviews revealed that most Grade R teachers feel they are not practically prepared to implement inclusive education because they had limited knowledge on using some of the resources. Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory identifies these negative feelings as "person factors" that could have a negative influence on the teachers' abilities to cope as inclusive practitioners in the microsystem of the classroom (process factors) (See 3.5 of chapter 3). The observations, on the other hand, showed that Grade R teachers are prepared to interact in various verbal and non-verbal ways with diverse learners with diverse learning needs. A number of the teachers were able to implement some inclusive strategies successfully in their teaching, which suggests that they received teacher preparation to cope as inclusive practitioners and use resources profitably. They did not, however, compile lesson plans that reflect inclusive planning strategies. These findings point to a need to enhance teacher preparation programmes so that Grade R teachers are able to cope as inclusive practitioners. The observations also revealed that the DoE provided various resources for Grade R classes, but teachers sometimes lacked the knowledge and skill to use the resources. This indicates that they have not received practical training

on how to use the resources in Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education, which is an indication that these programmes lack a practical component most of the time.

5.9 INFUSION OF CURRICULUM DIFFERENTIATION IN GRADE R TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMMES FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

5.9.1 Introduction

The research question that provided data concerning infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education is: How could teacher preparation programmes be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education? The findings of the study point to a need to infuse curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education so that Grade R teachers can cope as inclusive practitioners.

5.9.2 Interviews

Strides were made in the interviews to obtain practical ideas from teachers on ways to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The researcher sought ideas from Grade R teachers, because he viewed them as knowledgeable experts with practical experience of Grade R teaching and Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The interview data showed that they had extensive first-hand experience in teaching learners with diverse learning needs in Grade R (See 5.8 of this chapter).

Curriculum differentiation can be identified as the “processes of modifying, changing, adapting, extending, and varying teaching methodologies, teaching strategies, assessment strategies and the content of the curriculum” (Department of Basic Education 2011b: 7). These processes are aimed at developing inclusive classrooms where all learners are “included and affirmed” (Department of Basic Education 2011b: 7). The teachers interviewed for this study identified the need to infuse curriculum differentiation in teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education:

Teacher 1: “Teachers must go for training and workshops. They must learn different strategies to teach inside and outside the classroom, because some children love to play and learn outside.”

Teacher 2: “Teachers should be trained to use different strategies to teach learners with special needs, for example using music and games to teach.”

Teacher 3: “Training should allow teachers the freedom to find or develop methods that work for them, also to adapt their lesson plans to meet the needs of the learners.”

Teacher 7: “At the university they learn how to teach, but in the class they have to do it practically and find that children have special needs and they have to adapt their teaching.”

Teacher 8: “Departmental officials should visit schools regularly to identify challenges and plan workshops and training based on the needs and challenges of teachers.”

It is significant that the teachers used terms that appear in the above definition of curriculum differentiation that was given by the Department of Basic Education: “strategies,” “methods,” “adapt.” This can be seen as an indicator that curriculum differentiation is viewed by in-service teachers and the Department of Basic Education as a means to develop inclusive education in Grade R classrooms. This points to a need to infuse curriculum differentiation in Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education.

The literature review showed that teachers in other parts of the world share the same sentiments (See 2.3 of chapter 2). Teachers in India, for example, indicated that more emphasis should be placed on practical strategies that they could use to include diverse learners in inclusive classrooms.

5.9.2 Observations

The observations showed that Grade R in-service teachers used various strategies to respond to learner diversity. They differentiated teaching methods and assessments to get all learners to participate in the learning process. In the majority of classes, however, there were learners who were not part of the learning process. Various factors influenced this situation, for example the classes were overcrowded and teachers had insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources for successful curriculum differentiation (See 5.8 of this chapter).

This correlates with the data collected during the interviews, where the teachers revealed they needed training to cope as inclusive practitioners (See 5.9.2 of this chapter). They also indicated that there is a need to infuse curriculum differentiation in Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education.

5.9.3 Document analysis

The document analysis showed that government is aware that various aspects of the school curriculum can cause barriers to learning (Department of Basic Education 2011b: 5). The Guidelines for Responding to Learner Diversity in the Classroom through Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements is an example of a document that government developed in response to this situation. This document is aimed at facilitating and supporting curriculum differentiation to respond to learner diversity in the classroom (Department of Basic Education 2011b: 5). It was developed to guide Grade R teachers to understand diversity in the classroom, and it provides strategies that can be used to include diverse learners in the learning process. It appears, however, that the guidelines are not enough, and the findings of this study show that Grade R in-service teachers cannot cope as inclusive practitioners and there is a need for curriculum differentiation to be infused in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education (See 5.9.2 of this chapter). Furthermore, the analysis of their lesson plans revealed a lack of planning for curriculum differentiation (See 5.7.4 of this chapter). Based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, one can conclude that a need exists for government and training institutions to collaborate and decide in the exosystem to infuse curriculum differentiation in Grade

R teacher preparation programmes to address the challenges that Grade R teachers are experiencing as inclusive practitioners in the microsystem of the classroom (See 3.4 of chapter 3). This affirms Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which emphasises the collaborative aspect of the various systems making up the education system.

5.9.4 Concluding remarks about infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education

The findings revealed a need to infuse curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. This finding correlates with the literature review, which showed that Grade R teachers in various parts of the world feel the same about curriculum differentiation (See 2.3 of chapter 2). Sharma et al. (2009: 327) found a connection between teacher preparation programmes and teacher confidence: they found that teachers have more positive attitudes to inclusive education if they are able to apply curriculum differentiation and if they were trained to use practical strategies to cope in inclusive classrooms. Walton et al (2014: 238) found that South African teachers were unable to implement inclusive strategies because of "various contextual and systemic constraints," and they needed ongoing, school-based support to cope with the challenges of inclusive education.

These finding were confirmed by data from the observations which revealed that learners in many Grade R classes were excluded from learning processes and Grade R teachers needed training to implement curriculum differentiation. The document analysis also showed that Grade R lesson plans did not include planning for curriculum differentiation. The analysis of government documents showed that government had guidelines in place to guide Grade R teachers in curriculum differentiation. Teachers indicated in the interviews that they needed training to implement curriculum differentiation, which points to a need for government and training institutions to collaborate so curriculum differentiation can be infused in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. The statements in this section also point to a need to analyse the prevailing additional model of teacher preparation for inclusion versus a more content infused model (See 2.2 of chapter 2).

5.10 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The Further Education and Training Certificate: ECD (Level 4) has been identified as the minimum requirement for Grade R practitioners. This qualification aims to provide ECD practitioners with the skills they need to develop young children and offer quality ECD services in diverse learning environments. Government is striving to put measures in place to provide inclusive educational services to Grade R learners, and Grade R teacher preparation programmes are structured so Grade R teachers can cope with the challenges of inclusive education. The findings of this study showed, however, that challenges exist in the provision of inclusive education, as well as in Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. The findings also showed that Grade R in-service teachers felt that current Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education was not adequate.

While government and training institutions are making steady progress to develop Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education, the findings revealed that Grade R in-service teachers were not confident to translate the theory that they have learnt into practice when they were faced with real classroom situations. This shows that they are unable to cope as inclusive practitioners because of the lack of a practical component, which shows that these programmes are not adequate to prepare them to cope as inclusive practitioners. Grade R in-service teachers indicated that they needed more in-service teacher preparation programmes to cope as inclusive practitioners. And they indicated that they want Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes to be structured in a practical way that can equip them with relevant knowledge and skills that they need for inclusive education.

The data also revealed that Grade R in-service teachers felt that they are not prepared to implement inclusive education because they have insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources. The observations showed that teachers are able to interact with diverse learners with diverse learning needs, but they were often unable to use available resources for inclusive education because they did not receive training to use the resources in practical ways for inclusive education.

The Grade R teachers made valuable recommendations to enhance Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. These include a need to infuse curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. The findings showed that learners were often excluded from the learning process because Grade R teachers did not have strategies to include diverse learners in the learning processes. Grade R in-service teachers indicated that infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes would provide them with knowledge and skills they could use to include all learners in learning processes.

5.11 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter the researcher provides the findings of the study. Section 5.2 provides an explanation of the qualitative methodology used for this study. The data analysis is explained in section 5.3. The participant profiles in section 5.4 give the reader a better understanding of the participants and the data collected from them. The presentation of the findings is explained in section 5.5, and the sections that follow present the findings of the study according to the themes: Theme 1: Inadequate Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education; Theme 2: Insufficient translation of theory into practice; Theme 3: Insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources; Theme 4: Infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. The findings show that a lot of progress has been made in South Africa since 1994 to develop Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education, but various challenges still exist in current Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education.

The findings reveal that Grade R teachers generally have negative experiences as inclusive practitioners, and most of them feel unprepared to cope as inclusive practitioners. The Grade R teachers in the sample group are skilled and experienced teachers, but based on their responses to the interview questions, they appear to lack self-confidence in their abilities as inclusive practitioners. This could be because inclusive education is relatively “new” in South Africa, and there is the need for enhanced in-service teacher preparation programmes, so Grade R in-service teachers can become more comfortable with the “new” terminologies and practical

aspects of implementing inclusive education. It could also improve their abilities as inclusive practitioners if in-service teacher preparation programmes were designed to improve their self-confidence and give them positive mindsets about inclusive education and their abilities as inclusive practitioners. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and bioecological theory are used as a lens in this chapter to explore and provide understanding of Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa. These theories were selected because they are ideal to explore the interactions and collaborations between the various systems making up the education system. An example of this is the collaboration between government and training institutions in the exosystem where government develops policies that are used by training institutions to design Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. These in-service teacher preparation programmes can improve the situation for Grade R in-service teachers in the Grade R inclusive classrooms.

The next chapter presents a summary of findings and conclusions of the study. The implications and limitations of the study will also be briefly discussed.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and implications of the study. Recommendations are made to improve the situation for Grade R teachers.

The findings are summarised in section 6.2, and the implications of the findings are presented in section 6.3. Based on the findings, section 6.4 offers recommendations to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education, as well as recommendations for further research. Section 6.4 includes proposed guidelines to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education, as well as recommendations for further research. The limitations of the study are discussed in section 6.5. Section 6.6 presents the conclusions.

6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This section presents a summary of the findings of the study:

6.2.1 Inadequate Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education

The findings revealed that training institutions are striving to develop and improve Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education, but they are constrained by government policies that are often vague and difficult to implement. The empirical study confirms that the South African government has made great strides with policy development for inclusive education, but some universities find it difficult to provide Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes that are “conceptually coherent and pedagogically appropriate” for inclusive education (Walton 2015: 175). The result of this situation is that current Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes are inadequate to prepare

Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education, and Grade R in-service teachers find it difficult to cope as inclusive practitioners. The findings of the literature review showed that Grade R teachers in the vast majority of countries, including South Africa, have negative experiences with teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. The findings showed that the negative experience could be related to shortcomings in the additional model of teacher preparation for inclusion that is used by most countries. Grade R teachers identified various shortcomings in current teacher preparation programmes which made them feel unprepared to cope with the challenges of inclusive education. It emerged from the findings of the empirical study that most Grade R teachers feel they are not prepared to implement inclusive education. This situation points to a need to consider using the infusion model of teacher preparation in place of the additional model. These findings are in line with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. According to this theory, government and training institutions make decisions in the exosystem (See 3.4 of chapter 3). The Grade R in-service teacher in the microsystem, which is the school in this study, is indirectly affected by decisions made in the exosystem, because these decisions determine the nature of the in-service teacher preparation programmes to which Grade R in-service teachers are exposed. It is clear that decisions taken in the exosystem influence Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes, and the Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes affect the Grade R teachers' ability to cope as inclusive practitioners in the microsystem of the school. Challenges in the implementation of inclusive policies in the microsystem point to a need to explore the policy-decisions made in the exosystem.

6.2.2 Insufficient translation of theory into practice

It emerged from the findings that Grade R teachers generally have negative experiences of Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. They identify insufficient translation of theory into practice as a problem, and indicate that Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes need to be structured so as to equip them with knowledge and skills that can be used in day-to-day practise. They also indicated that they want support to continue, even after teacher preparation programmes have come to an end. The findings also reveal that Grade R teachers are not confident in their abilities to provide support to learners

with diverse learning needs. The findings point to a need to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes, possibly by using the infusion model as discussed in 2.2 of chapter two. This could also address teacher self-confidence, because all teachers would experience inclusive education as part of their training, which would improve their self-confidence in their abilities as inclusive practitioners. Based on Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory, self-confidence is described as a 'person factor' that can impact the 'process factors.' In the context of this study, it means that the lack of self-confidence (person factor) of the Grade R in-service teachers could negatively impact their ability to cope as inclusive practitioners in the teaching and learning that take place between them and their learners in the microsystem of the classroom (process factors).

6.2.3 Insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources

The literature review revealed that teachers are often unable to cope as inclusive practitioners because they did not receive training on use of resources for inclusive education (See 2.3 of chapter 2). The findings of the empirical study revealed that most Grade R teachers feel they are not prepared to implement inclusive education, because they have insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources. The data from the observations confirmed that various resources were available in Grade R classrooms, but Grade R in-service teachers were often unable to use the resources to include all learners in the learning processes. The findings point to a need to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes so that Grade R in-service teachers can acquire knowledge on the use of resources that are available in their classrooms, so they can cope better as inclusive practitioners.

6.2.4 Infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education

The literature review provided ways of improving Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education, for example by focusing on practical training for teachers (See 5.7 of chapter 5). The review of models of teacher preparation also gave various ways to improve Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education, for example a school-based model where aspiring teachers gain

experience by working as assistant teachers (See 2.6 of chapter 2). The literature review showed that there are more successes in the implementation of inclusive education in countries where the infusion model is used than in countries where the additional model is used. For the empirical study, the researcher collected suggestions to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education from Grade R in-service teachers in the sample group. They gave various suggestions, including a need for training where they learn to use different strategies to include diverse learners in the learning processes. They strongly emphasised a need to infuse curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. Based on ecological systems theory, the DOE, training institutions and Grade R teachers are important components or stakeholders in the education system and they have important collaborative roles to play in the function of the system as a whole (See 3.4 of chapter 3). There is a need for continued interaction and collaboration between the stakeholders to achieve meaningful and relevant outcomes to address challenges in Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The next section explores the implications of the findings of this study.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

In this section the researcher discusses the findings and to what extent they address each research question. The study found that government is striving to build an education system that provides equal and inclusive education to all the people of South Africa. To this effect, various policies and guidelines have been developed to guide current teacher preparation programmes to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education (See 2.4 of chapter 2). These policies and guidelines state that all training institutions should design Grade R teacher preparation programmes that promote equality and inclusivity, and these programmes should prepare Grade R teachers to cope as inclusive practitioners in the inclusive environment of the Grade R classroom (Department of Education White Paper No. 6 2001) (See chapter 5). Currently Grade R teacher preparation programmes are regulated by government, and training institutions are required to register their teacher preparation programmes with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) so their programmes are in line with government policies and requirements

(Department of Higher Education and Training 2015: 58). Although much is being done by government, many universities continue to experience challenges to provide practical Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes that are adequate to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa (See 5.6 of chapter 5). The findings in this study confirmed claims by authors such as Osman and Booth (2014: 160); Walton and Lloyd (2012: 62) and Walton (2015: 175), who found that training institutions experience difficulties in designing Grade R teacher preparation programmes that promote equality and inclusivity. The result of this is that Grade R teacher preparation programmes fail to prepare teachers to cope as inclusive practitioners. This study also found that government policies are not clear in providing guidelines to implement inclusive policies. This leads to many training institutions experiencing challenges to apply government policies to design Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education. This points to a need for more research to explore ways to implement government policies so training institutions could design Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes that adequately prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education.

The researcher used qualitative methods to obtain information on the experiences or “insider perspectives” of Grade R in-service teachers on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education (See 4.2 of chapter 4). The findings revealed that they have experience of learner diversity and they are able to identify various instances of learner diversity and challenges in their classrooms, but they are not confident in their abilities to provide practical support to learners with diverse learning needs (See 5.7 of chapter 5). The majority of Grade R teachers stated that current Grade R teacher preparation programmes are not adequate to prepare them as inclusive practitioners because there was insufficient translation of theory into practice (See 5.7 of chapter 5). This correlates with the findings of such authors as Forlin et al. (2015: 329) and Engelbrecht et al (2016: 532), which showed that most teachers, nationally and internationally, lacked confidence with regard to inclusive education, and needed more knowledge, training and support to cope with the practical aspects of inclusive education. The findings reveal a need for more research to address issues related to knowledge, training and support for Grade R in-service teachers so they can cope as inclusive practitioners. It also reveals a need

for training to address specific concerns, for example to improve Grade R teachers' self-confidence in their ability to cope as inclusive practitioners. The findings of this study could be used to add to existing knowledge on the situation in the South African context with the aim of improving the situation for Grade R in-service teachers.

The findings also revealed that most Grade R in-service teachers feel they are not prepared to implement inclusive education (See chapter 5). The previous paragraphs pointed out their "lack of self-confidence in their ability as inclusive practitioners." The biological theory identifies these negative feelings as "person factors" that could have a negative influence on the Grade R teachers' abilities to cope as inclusive practitioners (See 3.5 of chapter 3).

The document analysis further showed that they did not compile lesson plans that reflect inclusive planning strategies (See 5.7 and 5.8 of chapter 5). The findings, on the other hand, showed that Grade R teachers are able to interact in various ways with diverse learners with diverse learning needs (See chapter 5). The Grade R teachers were able to implement inclusive strategies in their teaching, which suggests that they possibly received teacher preparation to cope as inclusive practitioners.

The findings further showed that, although the Grade R in-service teachers were able to interact with their learners, the practical component was missing in their interaction, and the findings revealed that they had insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources for inclusive education. These findings are in line with the findings of the literature review, which showed that most Grade R teachers all over the world have negative experiences with Grade R teacher preparation and are not adequately prepared to implement inclusive education (Peebles and Mendaglio 2014: 245; Sharma et al. 2009: 321; Kuyini and Mangope 2011: 31). The present study reveals that more research is needed to obtain more data to explore the preparedness of Grade R teachers internationally based on their ability to select, provide and use resources to teach diverse learners, as well as their ability to use verbal and non-verbal interaction to teach diverse learners.

The researcher used interviewing as a means of obtaining practical ideas from Grade R teachers on ways to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. He followed this approach because the Grade R in-service teachers are knowledgeable experts with practical experience of Grade R teaching and in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The findings showed that they had first-hand experience in teaching learners with diverse learning needs. For this reason, the researcher values their ideas and suggestions to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. Their suggestions are also relevant because limited research has been conducted on the research topic in the South African context, and even less research has been conducted in the context where the participants of the study function as Grade R teachers. Based on these statements, one can say that a need exists for more research in this context, and the data generated by this study could be used to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation in this context. Many suggestions given by the participants correlate with the findings of the literature review (See chapters 2 and 5). These include: a need for practical training to cope in inclusive classrooms; school-based learning where Grade R teachers learn inclusive strategies in real classroom environments. They also identified a need for Grade R teacher collaboration to share experiences of inclusive education, as well as the inclusion of experts and qualified professionals in the design of Grade R teacher preparation programmes and the training of Grade R teachers. In addition to these suggestions, they also suggested greater focus on knowledge and skills development for inclusive education, and greater focus on values and teacher qualities needed for inclusive education. They also strongly feel that a need exists for infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. The Grade R teacher suggestions will be discussed in the next section, where recommendations will be made to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

By analysing the data of the literature review, interviews, observations and document analysis, the researcher was able to gain insight into the research question of how Grade R in-service teachers can be prepared to implement inclusive education. Based on the findings, the researcher was able to make recommendations aimed at

enhancing teacher preparation programmes to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education. The recommendations in the following sub-sections serve two purposes: firstly, to address the problems related to Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa, so that teacher preparation programmes could be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education, and secondly, to explore possibilities for future research in Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.

6.4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION

6.4.1.1 Inadequate Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education

This study found that government has good and relevant policies and guidelines in place to guide current teacher preparation programmes to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education. There are, however, challenges in the implementation of these policies, because the findings of the study reveal that Grade R in-service teachers see current Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes as inadequate to prepare them for inclusive education. This points to a need for more research to explore ways to implement government policies so training institutions could use the policies to guide them when designing Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education.

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that government forms a committee to review and improve policy implementation for Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. To this end, the committee could consult with various stakeholders in the education system, including training institutions and Grade R teachers, to establish what experiences they have with implementing government policies.
2. Government could also facilitate interaction and consultation between stakeholders, for example training institutions could consult with Grade R teachers who function as knowledgeable and experienced experts and tap into their practical experience to guide them so they could design teacher preparation programmes that are relevant and appropriate for the needs of

Grade R inclusive classrooms.

3. A needs assessment should also be conducted with Grade R in-service teachers because they know what skills, knowledge, values and attitudes are lacking to make their classes more inclusive.
4. The infusion model could be used to design teacher preparation courses that are relevant for the needs of teachers and learners.

6.4.1.2 Insufficient translation of theory into practice

The findings revealed the experiences or “insider perspectives” of Grade R teachers on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. It emerged from the findings of this study that Grade R teachers generally have negative experiences of Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. They strongly felt that Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes were inadequate because there was insufficient translation of theory into practice. They want teacher preparation programmes to be structured in a way that can equip them with knowledge and skills that they can use practically as inclusive practitioners. They also indicated they want support to continue after teacher preparation programmes and workshops have ended. The findings further revealed that the Grade R teachers have experience with learner diversity and they are able to identify various instances of learner diversity and challenges in their classrooms, but they are not confident in their abilities to provide support to learners with diverse learning needs. They indicated that Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes should have a practical component so they can acquire knowledge and skills to cope as inclusive practitioners.

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the information obtained through the consultative processes of the previous section be utilized to address issues related to knowledge, training and support for Grade R in-service teachers so they could obtain practical skills to cope in inclusive classrooms.
2. It is also recommended that Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes be designed to be practical and relevant so Grade R in-service teachers can be prepared to cope with the challenges of inclusive classrooms.

6.4.1.3 Insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources

The findings revealed that Grade R in-service teachers lack sufficient knowledge on the use of available resources for inclusive education. Grade R in-service teachers identified various shortcomings in current teacher preparation programmes which made them feel unprepared to cope with the challenges of inclusive classrooms. The findings revealed that most Grade R teachers feel they are not prepared to implement inclusive education. The findings revealed that Grade R teachers are able to interact in various verbal and non-verbal ways with diverse learners with diverse learning needs, and they were able to implement inclusive strategies in their teaching. The practical component was missing, however, and they had insufficient knowledge to use available resources in practical ways for inclusive education. The findings revealed they are not fully prepared to cope as inclusive practitioners because they have insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources. They indicated in the interview responses that they need more training on the use of available resources for inclusive education.

Recommendations:

1. The previous paragraph points out that Grade R in-service teachers are able to interact in various verbal and non-verbal ways with their learners. This shows that Grade R in-service teachers can excel when teaching and learning are of a more interactive and practical nature. Based on this finding, it is recommended that teacher preparation programmes are designed with heavy emphasis on practical aspects of inclusive education, including the use of available resources for inclusive education.
2. It is recommended that Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes are designed to provide Grade R in-service teachers with knowledge on the use of available resources for inclusive education.
3. It is also recommended that consultative processes be implemented between stakeholders, especially between Grade R in-service teachers and other stakeholders. This should be aimed at collecting information that will provide better understanding of the resources needed in Grade R inclusive classrooms. Teacher preparation programmes can then be designed to train Grade R in-service teachers on the use of resources for inclusive education.

6.4.1.4 Infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education

The researcher recognises the Grade R teachers as knowledgeable experts who have firsthand experience of inclusive education in Grade R classrooms. For this reason, he formulated interview questions to collect recommendations from them of ways to enhance teacher preparation programmes to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education. This approach is in line with the qualitative nature of this study. They provided valuable recommendations and identified a need for infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.

Recommendations: The following recommendations are made:

1. Consultative processes should be implemented between the Department of Education, training institutions and Grade R in-service teachers.
2. It is recommended that these processes be used to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of what curriculum differentiation entails based on documents and guidelines developed by the Department of Education.
3. It is further recommended that these processes be aimed at understanding the needs of Grade R in-service teachers and their learners.
4. It is recommended that the infusion model be considered for teacher preparation for inclusion, this model be used to infuse curriculum differentiation in Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education based on Grade R teacher and learner needs.
5. It is recommended that Grade R in-service teachers learn to apply curriculum differentiation in real classroom environments where they are able to interact with diverse learners with diverse learning needs.
6. The Grade R inclusive classroom is a dynamic and ever-changing environment, and teacher and learner needs change year after year. It is recommended that continuous support be provided to Grade R in-service teachers, so they are able to use diverse teaching strategies, adapt their lesson plans, and design assessment tools for inclusive education, etc, to keep up with changes in the inclusive classroom.

6.4.1.5 Proposed guidelines to enhance in-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R.

The following proposed guidelines are based on the findings of the literature review and the findings of the empirical study (See chapters 2 and 5). There are also correlations between the proposed guidelines and the recommendations given in the above sections of this chapter. The researcher aims to make the guidelines meaningful, relevant and implementable. To this end, he relied a lot on the practical recommendations given by Grade R in-service teachers as knowledgeable experts when he designed the guidelines.

Grade R in-service teachers have wealth of experience because they are practising teachers. The findings of the empirical study showed, however, that they lack confidence in their abilities as inclusive practitioners, and they identified specific areas where they need additional training or preparation to cope as inclusive practitioners. They have teaching qualifications and teaching experience, and it would, therefore, not be necessary for them to register for all the courses that are available for pre-service teacher preparation. The researcher proposes teacher preparation guidelines that offer single units or topics relevant to Grade R in-service teachers trying to cope as inclusive practitioners. Grade R in-service teachers could then select units relevant to their unique situations and experiences. This approach could be successful if there is consultation between stakeholders to understand what the needs of the Grade R in-service teachers and their learners are in the context of the inclusive classroom. Policy makers and course designers could consult with Grade R in-service teachers to understand their experiences, and design courses that are relevant and meaningful to their experiences. This approach would be ideal because the findings of this study showed that Grade R teacher have different experiences which are influenced by various factors, varying from insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources to overcrowded classrooms.

The proposed guidelines are:

1. Government should form a committee to review and improve implementation for Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. To this end, the committee could consult with various stakeholders in the education system, including training institutions and

Grade R teachers, to share experiences they have with implementing government policies.

2. Needs assessment should be conducted with Grade R in-service teachers so designers of programmes could understand what skills, knowledge, values and attitudes Grade R in-service teachers are lacking to make their classes more inclusive.
3. Based on the needs assessments, stakeholders should agree on time frames to start training and implementing strategies to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.
4. Government should facilitate interaction and consultation between stakeholders, for example training institutions could consult with Grade R teachers who function as knowledgeable and experienced experts and tap into their practical experience to guide them so they could design teacher preparation programmes appropriate for the needs of Grade R inclusive classrooms.
5. Information obtained through consultative processes should be used to address issues related to knowledge, training and support for Grade R in-service teachers, so they are able to acquire practical skills to cope in inclusive classrooms.
6. Consultative processes between stakeholders should be aimed at collecting information that will provide better understanding of the resources needed in Grade R inclusive classrooms, as well as understanding of the way these resources should be used successfully.
7. Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes should be designed to provide Grade R in-service teachers with knowledge on the use of available resources for inclusive education.
8. Consultative processes should be implemented between the Department of Education, training institutions and Grade R in-service teachers to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of what curriculum differentiation entails based on documents and guidelines developed by the Department of Education.
9. Curriculum differentiation should be infused in Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education based on Grade R in-service teacher and learner needs.

10. Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes should have a practical component where Grade R teachers learn to apply curriculum differentiation in their own, real classroom situations where they are able to interact with diverse learners with diverse learning needs.
11. The Grade R inclusive classroom is a dynamic and ever-changing environment, and teacher and learner needs change year after year. For this reason, continuous support should be provided to Grade R in-service teachers, so they are able to apply curriculum differentiation in dynamic, changing environments.
12. To ensure sustainability of the training, trainers could do classroom observations and continue to monitor Grade R teachers at schools until they are sufficiently confident to function independently.
13. Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education should train Grade R teachers to apply curriculum differentiation in practical situations, for example to use diverse teaching strategies, to adapt their lesson plans, and design assessment tools for inclusive education.
14. Teacher trainers should be knowledgeable about inclusive education in the context of the Grade R classroom, and could even include qualified and experienced Grade R in-service teachers.
15. Teacher trainers should demonstrate practical aspects in a practical way so Grade R in-service teachers are able to apply the knowledge practically.
16. Grade R teachers should be skilled and knowledgeable and confident to the extent that they are able to transfer knowledge and skills among themselves, even in cluster meetings.

The proposed guidelines are based on the findings that emerged from the study and are aimed at addressing some of the issues related to Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The findings revealed there is inadequate Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The researcher proposes the above guidelines to address this issue and to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. He recognises that Grade R in-service teachers are knowledgeable experts with lived experiences of Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. To this effect, he used data collected

from them to formulate findings that could be used to propose guidelines to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The Grade R in-service teachers are also identified in the guidelines as knowledgeable stakeholders who should be consulted when decisions are made pertaining to Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.

The Grade R in-service teachers strongly felt that Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes were inadequate because there was insufficient translation of theory into practice. They want teacher preparation programmes to be structured in a way that can equip them with knowledge and skills that they can use practically as inclusive practitioners. The above guidelines propose that government and teacher training institutions consult with Grade R in-service teachers when they develop teacher preparation programmes, so Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes can equip Grade R in-service teachers with knowledge and skills they can use practically as inclusive practitioners.

The Grade R in-service teachers also felt they cannot cope as inclusive practitioners because they have insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources for inclusive education. They indicated that they need more training on the use of available resources for inclusive education. The above guidelines propose that stakeholders should consult with one another so they can understand what resources are needed in Grade R inclusive classrooms, as well as the way these resources should be used successfully. Based on these consultations, Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes should be designed to provide Grade R in-service teachers with knowledge on the use of available resources for inclusive education.

They also identified infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R in-service teacher preparation as a way to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The proposed guidelines propose that Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes should be designed for inclusive education and should train Grade R teachers to apply curriculum differentiation in practical situations, for example to use diverse teaching strategies, to adapt their lesson plans, and design assessment tools for inclusive education.

The proposed guidelines could be related to Bronfenbrenner's theory. The microsystem could be the school and classroom environment where direct interaction takes place between Grade R in-service teachers and their learners; it could also be the environment where Grade R in-service teachers have direct interaction and consultation with one another. It is through this direct interaction that they gain knowledge and experience that puts them in an ideal position to make valuable contributions to processes aimed at enhancing Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.

The mesosystem could be the environment where various microsystems interact: it could be the environment where interaction takes place between Grade R in-service teachers and their counterparts from other schools, and could be the environment where Grade R in-service teachers and officials from DOE and training institutions interact. The mesosystem could also be the environment where researchers do fieldwork that could eventually guide decision-makers in decision-making on inclusive policies and courses.

The exosystem is the environment where government makes policy decisions that affect Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. It could also be the university environment where university officials do consultation and decision-making about the design and content of Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes that universities could offer. These decisions could be made after consultation with other stakeholders in the mesosystem.

The macrosystem could be the South African cultural environment that contains the dominant social and economic structures of South African society. These structures influence decisions that are made on all levels of society. These ideologies should be borne in mind and be reflected in the design and implementation of Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.

The chronosystem consists of the timeframes that are associated with Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. These timeframes should be discussed among all stakeholders, and all stakeholders should agree on them and commit to implement them. The present study found that Grade R teachers are

currently experiencing various challenges as inclusive practitioners. This situation requires immediate consultation between stakeholders, so decisions can be made to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.

6.4.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The findings of this study suggest further research:

1. Further research could explore new, effective ways to develop in-service teacher training programmes which include practical components. Training institutions will be better positioned and able to offer Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education if these challenges are addressed.
2. The Grade R in-service teachers who participated in this study shared their honest first-hand experiences as inclusive practitioners, and the study revealed that they have a wealth of knowledge and experience that they can share with other stakeholders. Further research could explore ways to bring together Grade R in-service teachers and designers of teacher preparation courses and policy makers to share meaningful discourse on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.
3. As the socio-economic and political landscape of South Africa continues to change, so does the education system. Further and on-going research is needed to explore ways for the education system to stay relevant and meaningful and keep up with socio-economic and political developments, and Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes should be designed to be relevant and meaningful as well.
4. The study showed that Grade R in-service teachers face challenges that are beyond their control, for example overcrowded classrooms and shortages of teaching resources. Further research could explore these challenges, with the aim to address them and improve Grade R in-service teacher preparation
5. Future research could also be done to explore effective ways to infuse curriculum differentiation in Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education.
6. The study focused on Grade R in-service teacher preparation. Further research could be done to explore ways of enhancing Grade R pre-service

teacher preparation to minimise challenges that Grade R in-service teachers are experiencing.

6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study focuses on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in the Eastern Cape, therefore the results cannot be generalised to all Grade R in-service teachers.
2. Grade R in-service teachers were identified as knowledgeable experts who have valuable knowledge and experience that they can share with other stakeholders. The study did not, however, provide detailed descriptions of ways to improve interaction between Grade R in-service teachers and other stakeholders.
3. The study did not provide a detailed discussion of the way South African socio-economic and political factors influence the education system in South Africa.
4. This study did not explore the possibility of enhancing Grade R pre-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education as a means to ensure that future Grade R in-service teachers are able to cope as inclusive practitioners.

6.6 CONCLUSIONS

The essence of this study was to explore Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa. The objectives were: to explore what teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa; to explore the experiences of Grade R in-service teachers with regard to Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa; to explore how current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R in-service teachers to implement inclusive education in South Africa; to explore how Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes could be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education.

The findings revealed that various policies and guidelines have been put in place in

South Africa since 1994 to develop Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. These policies and guidelines guide training institutions in designing Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. Despite the progress that has been made to develop policies and guidelines, various challenges exist in current Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. A major challenge is that some South African universities and training providers are finding it difficult to provide Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes that are appropriate for inclusive education because the practical component is lacking. The findings of this study also showed that Grade R in-service teachers generally have negative experiences as inclusive practitioners. Most of them feel unprepared to cope as inclusive practitioners. The Grade R in-service teachers were skilled and experienced teachers, but their responses to the interview questions showed that they lacked self-confidence in their abilities as inclusive practitioners. They also indicated that Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes are inadequate, and they indicated a need for more and enhanced training. The findings provided valuable recommendations to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes so that in-service teachers can cope as inclusive practitioners.

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that government has good policies and guidelines that guide Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education, but more consultation is needed with all stakeholders so challenges can be identified and addressed. This approach would make it easier for training institutions to design Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes that are appropriate for inclusive education. Based on the findings that Grade R teachers have negative experiences with Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education, one can conclude that Grade R teachers would benefit from training programmes that are appropriate and practical for inclusive education. Additionally, it would help them cope as inclusive practitioners if Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes are designed to help develop their self-confidence and change their mindset about their abilities as inclusive practitioners. The study revealed that Grade R teachers are knowledgeable experts in their field, and they were able to provide practical ideas and suggestions to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. This shows that they can

make valuable contributions to discussions and decisions pertaining to policy on inclusive education and the design of Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes.

The aim of this study was to explore Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa. The aims and objectives were met, and the research questions were answered. It emerged from the study that policies and guidelines have been put in place by government to develop Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. These policies and guidelines are used by training institutions to guide them in designing Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. Various challenges exist, though; a major challenge is the insufficient translation of theory into practice. The study also found that Grade R in-service teachers are able to adapt their teaching to accommodate learners with diverse learning needs in their classes, but they had insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources for inclusive education. It also emerged from the study that they generally have negative experiences as inclusive practitioners, and the majority of them lack the self-confidence to cope as inclusive practitioners. They shared valuable ideas to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. They pointed out that there is a need to infuse curriculum differentiation in Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education. At the end of the study, the researcher made recommendations to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education, and he proposed guidelines that could be used as a guide to enhance Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education.

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APPENDIX A



UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2017/09/13

Ref: 2017/09/13/49047582/21/MC

Dear Mr Ferreira

Name: Mr NJ Ferreira

Student: 49047582

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2017/09/13 to 2022/09/13

Researcher:

Name: Mr NJ Ferreira

Email: 49047582@mylife.unisa.ac.za

Telephone: 046 603 8018

Supervisor:

Name: Prof FD Mahlo

Email: mahlofd@unisa.ac.za

Telephone: 012 481 2756

Title of research:

In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R

Qualification: D Ed in Inclusive Education

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2017/08/16 to 2022/08/16.

The low risk application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2017/09/13 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:



University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date 2022/09/13. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

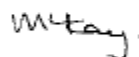
Note:

The reference number 2017/09/13/49047582/21/MC should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,



Dr M Claassens
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
mcdtc@netactive.co.za



Prof V McKay
EXECUTIVE DEAN



University of South Africa
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APPENDIX B



Permission request letter: Eastern Cape Department of Education - Head Office

Request for permission to conduct research at selected primary schools in the Grahamstown District:

12 October 2017

Title: In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R

The Director

Strategic Planning Policy Research & Secretariat Services

Eastern Cape Department of Education

Steve Vukile Complex

Zone 6

Zwelitsha

5608

Tel: 040 608 4537/4035/4773

Dear Sir/Madam

I, Nathan Ferreira, am doing research under the supervision of Professor F.D. Mahlo in the Department of Inclusive Education towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. We have funding from the University of South Africa to research in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in Grade R. We are requesting permission to involve selected primary schools in the study entitled: In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R.

The aim of the study is to explore Grade R in-service teacher preparation. The research is guided by the following research questions:

1. What teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa.

2.What are the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa?

3.How do current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South African classrooms?

4.How could teacher preparation programmes be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education?

The primary schools have been selected because they have Grade R learners and the principal and Grade R teachers have valuable experience that can help answer the research questions.

This study will use a qualitative methodology that will involve conducting interviews at different primary schools in the Grahamstown District with a maximum of 20 Grade R teachers, depending on data saturation. In addition to the interviews, I will read the lesson plans and conduct classroom observations with the 20 Grade R teachers.

The major benefit of this study is that it could produce results that improve the working conditions of Grade R teachers.

The identities of all the participants will remain anonymous, and all their information will be treated confidentially. The interviews will be conducted after normal working hours and will last approximately forty minutes, and the observations, which will be conducted during school hours, will be as brief and unobtrusive as possible so the school programme is not disrupted.

The data will be available for participants during and after the study, so they can verify that everything is correct. The final thesis will be available for the Eastern Cape Department of Education. The University of South Africa will also make the thesis available online, and I plan on publishing the finding in an accredited journal.

For further information concerning this study, please contact me at 0737938335 or e-mail 49047582@mylife.unisa.ac.za.

Yours sincerely



Nathan Ferreira

Researcher

APPENDIX C



STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES
Steve Vukile Tshwete Complex • Zone 6 • Zwelitsha • Eastern Cape
Private Bag X0032 • Bisho • 5600 • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: +27 (0)40 608 4773/4035/4537 • Fax: +27 (0)40 608 4574 • Website: www.ecdoe.gov.za

Enquiries: B Pamla Email: bpamla@ecdoe.gov.za Date: 04 December 2017

Mr Nathan Ferreira

2 Lucas Avenue

Helath Care Centre

Rhodes University

Grahamstown

6139

Dear Mr Ferreira

PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A DOCTORAL RESEARCH: INSERVICE TEACHER PREPARATION TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN GRADE R

1. Thank you for your application to conduct research.
2. Your application to conduct the abovementioned research involving 20 Grade R teachers nine Primary schools in Grahamstown under the jurisdiction of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) is hereby approved based on the following conditions:
 - a. there will be no financial implications for the Department;
 - b. institutions and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation;
 - c. you present a copy of the written approval letter of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) to the Cluster and District Directors before any research is undertaken at any institutions within that particular district;
 - d. you will make all the arrangements concerning your research;
 - e. the research may not be conducted during official contact time;
 - f. should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application to do this must be directed to Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;



- g. your research will be limited to those institutions for which approval has been granted, should changes be effected written permission must be obtained from the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;
 - h. you present the Department with a copy of your final paper/report/dissertation/thesis free of charge in hard copy and electronic format. This must be accompanied by a separate synopsis (maximum 2 – 3 typed pages) of the most important findings and recommendations if it does not already contain a synopsis.
 - i. you present the findings to the Research Committee and/or Senior Management of the Department when and/or where necessary.
 - j. you are requested to provide the above to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation upon completion of your research.
 - k. you comply with all the requirements as completed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoE document duly completed by you.
 - l. you comply with your ethical undertaking (commitment form).
 - m. You submit on a six monthly basis, from the date of permission of the research, concise reports to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation
3. The Department reserves a right to withdraw the permission should there not be compliance to the approval letter and contract signed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoE.
 4. The Department will publish the completed Research on its website.
 5. The Department wishes you well in your undertaking. You can contact the Director, Ms. NY Kanjana on the numbers indicated in the letterhead or email nykanjana@live.co.za should you need any assistance.



NY KANJANA
DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH & SECRETARIAT SERVICES
FOR SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL: EDUCATION



APPENDIX D



Permission request letter: Grahamstown District Office

Request for permission to conduct research at selected primary schools in the Grahamstown District:

12 October 2017

Title: In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R

The Director

Eastern Cape Department of Education

Grahamstown District Office

Private Bag X 1001

Grahamstown

6140

Dear Sir/Madam

I, Nathan Ferreira, am doing research under the supervision of Professor F.D. Mahlo in the Department of Inclusive Education towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. We are conducting research on in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education in Grade R. We are requesting permission to involve selected primary schools in the study entitled: In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R.

The aim of the study is to explore Grade R teacher preparation. The research is guided by the following research questions:

- 1.What teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa.
- 2.What are the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa?
- 3.How do current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South African classrooms?
- 4.How could teacher preparation programmes be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education?

The following primary schools have been selected because they have Grade R learners, and the principals and Grade R teachers have valuable experience that can help answer the research questions: Oatlands Preparatory School, CM Vellem Primary School, Fikizolo Public Primary School, George Dickerson Primary School, Grahamstown Primary School, Qhayiya Primary School, Port Alfred Primary School, Kuyasa Combined School and Makana Public School.

This study will use qualitative methods that will involve conducting interviews with a maximum of 20 Grade R teachers, depending on data saturation. In addition to the interviews, I will read the lesson plans and conduct classroom observations with the 20 Grade R teachers. The major benefit of this study is that it could produce results that improve the working conditions of Grade R teachers. The identities of all the participants will remain anonymous, and all their information will be treated confidentially. The interviews will be conducted after normal working hours and will last approximately forty minutes, and the observations, which will be conducted during school hours, will be as brief and unobtrusive as possible so the school programme is not disrupted.

The data will be available for participants during and after the study, so they can verify that everything is correct. The final thesis will be available for the Eastern Cape Department of Education. The University of South Africa will also make the thesis available online, and I plan on publishing the finding in an accredited journal. I have received permission from the Provincial Department of Education to conduct the research. See the attached document.

For further information concerning this study, please contact me at 0737938335 or e-mail 49047582@mylife.unisa.ac.za.

Yours sincerely



Nathan Ferreira

Researcher

APPENDIX E



Permission request letter: Primary School Principals

Request for permission to conduct research at selected primary schools in the Grahamstown District:

12 October 2017

Title: In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R

The Principal

..... Primary School

..... Street

.....

Grahamstown District

Dear Sir/Madam

I, Nathan Ferreira, am doing research under the supervision of Professor F.D. Mahlo in the Department of Inclusive Education towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. I am asking for permission to involve you and your Grade R teachers in a study entitled: In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R.

The aim of the study is to explore Grade R teacher preparation. The research is guided by the following research questions:

- 1.What teacher preparation programmes are currently offered to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education in South Africa.
- 2.What are the experiences of Grade R teachers with regard to Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education in South Africa?
- 3.How do current teacher preparation programmes prepare Grade R teachers to implement inclusive education in South African classrooms?

4.How could teacher preparation programmes be enhanced to prepare Grade R in-service teachers for inclusive education?

Your school has been selected because the Grade R teachers have valuable experiences that can help answer the research questions.

This study will use qualitative methods that will involve conducting individual face-to-face interviews with the Grade R teachers. In addition to the interviews, I will read the lesson plans of the Grade R teachers and conduct classroom observations with them.

It is expected that the study would yield findings that could contribute to policy, practice and research on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. I intend on using the findings to propose a model of Grade R in-service teacher preparation that could improve the situation and conditions for Grade R teachers so they can cope in inclusive classrooms. Improving the situation and conditions for Grade R teachers would lead to improvement in education, because education would be more equal and inclusive for all Grade R learners, including those with disabilities. This would help to address social injustice and human rights issues.

The identities of all the participants will remain anonymous, and all your information will be treated confidentially. The interviews will be conducted after normal working hours and will last approximately forty minutes, and the observations, which will be conducted during school hours, will be as brief and unobtrusive as possible so the school programme is not disrupted.

The data will be available for participants during and after the study, so data verification can be done. The final thesis will be available for the participants. The University of South Africa will also make the thesis available online, and I plan on publishing the findings in an accredited journal.

For further information concerning this study, please contact me at 0737938335 or e-mail 49047582@mylife.unisa.ac.za.

Yours sincerely



Nathan Ferreira

Researcher

APPENDIX F



Participant information sheet

12 October 2017

Title: In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R

Dear prospective participant

I, Nathan Ferreira, am doing research under the supervision of Professor F.D. Mahlo in the Department of Inclusive Education towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled: In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R.

You have been selected because you have valuable experience of Grade R teaching and learning that can help answer the research questions of the study. A maximum of twenty Grade R teachers from various schools will participate in the study. The identities of all the participants will remain anonymous, and all information will be treated confidentially. The study involves, with your permission, individual face-to-face interviews, reading your lesson plans and doing classroom observations. The interviews will be conducted and recorded with an audio device after normal working hours and will last approximately forty minutes, and the observations, which will be conducted during school hours, will be as brief and unobtrusive as possible so the school programme is not disrupted. Participation in this study is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty and without giving reason. If you decide to take part, you will be given an information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. Participation in this study has no monetary remuneration but as a participant, you will make a valuable contribution to existing knowledge on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education.

It is expected that the study would yield findings that could contribute to policy, practice and research on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. The researcher intends on using the findings to propose a model of Grade R in-service teacher preparation that could improve the situation and conditions for Grade R teachers so they can cope in inclusive classrooms. Improving the situation and conditions for Grade R teachers would lead to improvement in education, because education would be more equal and inclusive for all

Grade R learners, including those with disabilities. This would help to address social injustice and human rights issues.

The data will be available for participants during and after the study for the purpose of data verification. The University of South Africa will make the thesis available online, and I plan on publishing the finding in an accredited journal.

For further information concerning this study, please contact me at 0737938335 or e-mail 49047582@mylife.unisa.ac.za.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Nathan Ferreira', written over a horizontal line.

Nathan Ferreira

Researcher

Consent to participate in this study

I-----, confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had it explained to me) and understand the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in this study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publication and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to be part of individual face-to-face interviews that may be recorded in audio format. I also agree that the researcher read my lesson plans and do classroom observations.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

PARTICIPANT'S FULL NAME _____

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

RESEARCHER'S FULL NAME _____

RESEARCHER'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

APPENDIX G

Interview guide for Grade R teachers

TOPIC: In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R

RESEARCHER: Nathan Ferreira

SUPERVISOR: Prof. F. D. Mahlo

SCHOOL:

PARTICIPANT (GRADE R TEACHER):

TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS:

GRADE R TEACHING QUALIFICATION:

TEACHING EXPERIENCE (YEARS):

GRADE R TEACHING EXPERIENCE (YEARS):

DATE OF INTERVIEW:

Interview questions

1. What is your understanding of the term "inclusive education"?
2. What is your understanding of the term "diverse learning needs" in reference to your Grade R learners?
3. Do you feel current Grade R teacher training programmes are adequate to train teachers to teach learners with diverse learning needs?
4. Do you feel adequately trained to teach Grade R learners with diverse learning needs?
5. What challenges do you experience in teaching Grade R learners with diverse learning needs?
6. In what ways can Grade R teacher training (including in-service training) be improved, so Grade R teachers can be adequately trained to teach learners with diverse learning needs?
7. Do you have any closing thoughts you would like to share with the researcher on this topic?

APPENDIX H

TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW DATA

Question 1: What is your understanding of the term “inclusive education”?	
Participant	Participant response
Participant 1	My understanding of inclusive education is to include myself first as a whole in my work and the learners also. I put myself in the lesson and form part of the lesson, for example to help learners with speech problems who have special needs.
Participant 2	For me that term means it's special needs, it's those children who are having problems in learning or physically, e.g. learners with hearing problems or one who is in a wheelchair who should be included in education.
Participant 3	Inclusive education in Grade R is to include all subjects so a child can learn about everything, so his fine motor skills, gross motor skills and all those aspects are developed. Inclusive education also means to develop social and emotional skills, sometimes as a teacher you are not sure whether you are doing the correct thing or not.
Participant 4	I think it means that people must be included in education, for example the Department of Education. People with knowledge, for example in foundation phase must all be included in the children's learning and do the same thing so they can boost the quality of education.
Participant 5	Inclusive education is to involve all learners in quality education because they have a right to education; include learners with barriers.
Participant 6	Inclusive education for me is a diversity of cultures, diversity of language, backgrounds, children with different learning abilities, different physical needs; it's children from all walks of life coming together in one classroom.
Participant 7	It's the education that we are doing, as instructed by the Department of Education, but most of the time they do not demonstrate how to do it, it means to follow the syllabus.
Participant 8	Inclusive means to include everyone in the education system, irrespective of disabilities, for example disabilities related to eyes, ears, or children in wheelchairs.
Participant 9	I think it means to include all learners, also those who have differences or barriers, for example with sight or physical barriers.

Participant 10	I think it's about learners with barriers, for example physical, eyesight, epilepsy
Participant 11	I think it refers to learners who need help, for example learners who don't understand quickly or learners who have problems with gross muscle development.

Question 2: What is your understanding of the term “diverse learning needs” in reference to your Grade R learners?	
Participant	Participant response
Participant 1	I think it refers to learners who have special needs, for example some learners are slow learners and they need special attention, and others have speech problems.
Participant 2	Learners are different, teachers need to love them and be patient and calm, this must be seen in the way they practice inclusive education in real life situations. Learners are unique, for example some are quiet and have unique problems.
Participant 3	Grade R is the first school year for children, and different children have different ideas of what school is about; the teacher has to adapt his/her teaching and teach all children and prepare them for Grade 1.
Participant 4	I'm thinking of normal children and children who have learning disabilities. Some are fast learners and others are slow learners who need more help.
Participant 5	Different physical needs, social needs, emotional needs. These are often revealed in their behaviour or in their drawings. These factors influence the way children learn and we strive to include all learners in learning.
Participant 6	I have a number of different home languages in my class, from Afrikaans to Xhosa to, this year, Portuguese. In the past I had German, I had French, I had Shona. And that's quite a difficult thing, because giving instructions in English when it's not their home language can be a problem. The other thing is different cultures and different ways of doing things, for example addressing adults or your peers. It's important to know what's wrong in my culture may not be wrong in theirs.
Participant 7	Children are different, some are slow learners, some do not speak the same language and some can't express themselves or pronounce English words.

Participant 8	To include everyone irrespective of differences, for example include every child irrespective of language differences, but teach them on their level of understanding.
Participant 9	In my class I've got different learners: one of my learners is partially sighted, another learner has a physical problem, he has a small head and he has problems with walking, but his brain function is good. We need to accommodate them in class.
Participant 10	Some are slow learners, and I have two learners with epilepsy, and one with a hearing problem.
Participant 11	One of my learners has muscle problems and moves at a slow pace, another one learns at a slow pace. One must be patient with them and have a skill to assist them.

Question 3: Do you feel current Grade R teacher training programmes are adequate to train teachers to teach learners with diverse learning needs?

Participant	Participant response
Participant 1	No, it's not easy to deal with diverse learning needs. Learners come from different backgrounds and need a lot of special attention. New teachers experience new challenges daily when they start teaching.
Participant 2	It's not enough, more training is needed because the situation is not okay, and training is needed continuously, every year.
Participant 3	Not really, it depends on which college or university they attend. I studied at two universities and found that their courses are different; the second university I attended offered better training because they focused a lot more on practical skills than the first university.
Participant 4	I don't think the training is enough; more training is needed, especially in special needs. Teachers need to be equipped to teach learners with special needs.
Participant 5	Yes, new Grade R teachers are able to cope at school.
Participant 6	No, I don't think so at all. From my understanding it's a very limited training. Grade R is not something that is emphasized at all, even if teachers are doing a BEd or a PGCE they might do six weeks max in a Grade R classroom. I don't think they know enough about what goes on in a Grade R classroom. My three year teacher training programme was purely Grade R and that made a huge difference, but that

	<p>doesn't happen anymore. And you get Grade R practitioners now who learn about educare, looking after children, their basic needs, but I don't think they get enough training in the educational side and how they can stimulate learning and what's important and what to emphasize. I don't think they get enough support either, because the people working at the Department often have no knowledge of Grade R, and they've never taught Grade R or they've never been trained in Grade R teaching. I also don't think teachers are exposed to diverse learners during their training. From what I see in the students that do practicals in my classroom, they are not trained to deal with learners with different educational needs, different languages, different physical abilities, it's one size fits all.</p>
Participant 7	<p>No, I don't think so. At the university they learn how to teach, but it is as if the trainers themselves do not know how to turn theory into practice, and then teachers have to do it practically and find that children have special needs and they have to adapt their teaching.</p>
Participant 8	<p>No, some new teachers find it difficult to cope when they start teaching because the training programmes do not have a practical component. Aspiring teachers that spend a lot of time in the classroom as part of their training are able to cope very well when they become qualified teachers. I know of a good training programme where the student spends three weeks during a month in a school and one week attending lecturers at university.</p>
Participant 9	<p>Some teachers got training to deal with learners with special needs, but some did not get the training and they need help from remedial teachers.</p>
Participant 10	<p>Teachers can't cope because they don't know what's going on in the classroom.</p>
Participant 11	<p>No, they don't really know what's going on in class because they don't have classroom experience.</p>

Question 4: Do you feel adequately trained to teach Grade R learners with diverse learning needs?

Participant	Participant response
Participant 1	<p>It's not enough, I didn't train for learners with special needs, I trained for mainstream. I need</p>

	more training or workshops to deal with new problems in the class.
Participant 2	No, it's not enough, I want more training. Grade R is the first year of school and the children come from different homes and different situations. The Grade R teacher needs continuous training to teach different children and children with special needs, for example children with emotional problems.
Participant 3	Yes, I think I'm adequately trained, but I cannot do everything I want to do, I am limited by the syllabus. Some children also learn faster than others, but the syllabus doesn't really allow for them to move ahead with their learning.
Participant 4	I am fine, but I need more training and understanding of children with special needs.
Participant 5	Yes, I adapt my teaching strategy to accommodate all learners, for example I start with basic work and gradually increase the difficulty level if a child doesn't understand the work.
Participant 6	Yes, I do, for two reasons. Firstly, my specialization was special education, and my fourth year was working with children with special needs, children with physical and mental disabilities. And secondly, I've been exposed to many learners with diverse learning needs during my 25 years as a teacher. I gained lots of experience, even through trial and error.
Participant 7	I received training, but things change as time goes on. I need continuous training to be able to teach different learners.
Participant 8	No, I need more training.
Participant 9	No, I was not trained to teach children with special needs, but I read books so I can know how to handle them.
Participant 10	No, there was no remedial training in our course.
Participant 11	We studied our books, but inclusive education is new to us, it was not in the course that we studied.

Question 5: What challenges do you experience in teaching Grade R learners with diverse learning needs?

Participant	Participant response
Participant 1	Some learners need special attention, some are very hyper, for example they dance on the tables, and I can't control them, they need more time and patience. I try my best, but they are too hyper.

Participant 2	The children are different and each child is unique. Children also don't understand one another's differences and they must be educated to respect differences, for example not to shout or make fun of a deaf learner.
Participant 3	Language is a challenge because my learners come from different homes where they speak different languages, approximately 95% of my learners speak Xhosa, but the medium of instruction at the school is Afrikaans, fortunately I speak a bit of Xhosa and we are able to communicate and learn together. Overcrowding is another challenge, I'm alone with 40 learners, and it's very difficult to give individual attention to each learner, especially when one considers that learners do not learn at the same pace. Thirty learners would be more manageable, so how do you deal with that situation of overcrowding because you need to teach the class.
Participant 4	Age difference is a challenge. Some children in my class are very young, even 4 to 5 year olds are sometimes too young for Grade R; they find it difficult to adjust to school, they struggle to pay attention and focus in class.
Participant 5	Social need is a problem. And children who did not attend crèches before they came to Grade R have a different classroom experience; their learning tempo is often slower than that of children who attended crèches.
Participant 6	One of the difficulties is the language, I speak English and Afrikaans, but I don't speak enough Xhosa. I have an assistant who is Xhosa speaking, so if I have difficulty explaining something to a child, then she will do the explanation in Xhosa after I've done it in English. I speak slowly and use lots of sign language when communication with the Portuguese learner, and I communicate with him through his mom. I also had a boy with Down Syndrome who had no language, and an autistic boy who had no language in the beginning; it was a challenge to communicate with them. Another challenge is getting parents involved so children with special needs can get professional diagnosis and support. Age difference is also a challenge, because learners are often not on the same level: younger learners often just want to play, while older learners want to learn.
Participant 7	When I give instructions to children, some are not able to follow instructions because they are

	not on the same level and they learn at a different pace.
Participant 8	Language is a challenge and many of my learners are Xhosa speakers even though the medium of instruction is not Xhosa. Code switching has proven to be very successful when I teach them.
Participant 9	Grade R learners are still young and it's sometimes difficult to identify their learning challenges. Facilities are also a problem, for example I do not have the facilities and resources that are needed for the learner with partial sight.
Participant 10	Overcrowding is a problem; I have 46 learners in my class. I can't give individual attention to them. The infrastructure is also a problem, for example the toilets are too high for Grade R learners.
Participant 11	Overcrowding makes it difficult to control children. Parents also don't support their children. Parents don't come to school so they can collaborate with teachers to help their children

Question 6: In what ways can in-service training for Grade R teachers be improved, so Grade R teachers can be adequately trained to teach learners with diverse learning needs?

Participant	Participant response
Participant 1	Teachers must go for training and workshops. They must learn different strategies to teach inside and outside the classroom, because some children love to play and learn outside. Teachers must be taught to make learning pleasant for learners.
Participant 2	The Department should make opportunities for us to get more information or go for training. Workshops should be conducted regularly, even weekly. The Department of Education should also provide bursaries for training. Teachers should be trained to use different strategies to teach learners with special needs, for example using music and games to teach.
Participant 3	Teachers need experience and the best way to learn to be a teacher is in the classroom. Teachers should meet with colleagues regularly and even work together so they can share their experiences. Training should allow teachers the freedom to find or develop methods that work for them, also to adapt their lesson plans to meet the needs of the learners.

Participant 4	Experienced teachers can do the training. Training should be practical, and teachers should be trained to use resources effectively. Teachers should also be trained how to do assessments, specifically for learners with special needs. Specific training is needed to deal with special needs and to prepare the child for Grade 1.
Participant 5	Teachers can benefit from workshops and training projects. Schools could also join together and create platforms for teachers to get together and share their experiences; they could share ideas and learn from one another. This would be possible if teachers have positive mindsets and good relationships. Other professionals, for example social workers can also form part of these interactions.
Participant 6	Teachers need to know the diverse learning needs of learners, for example they need to know what autism is, what dyslexia is. And teachers should be given continued support because learners and learner needs are different each year. In-service training should be relevant to the needs of the learners, not a one size fits all. The Department should also be in touch with teachers and teacher needs. Teacher training should be conducted by qualified people and professionals, for example by occupational therapists and speech therapists who can help teachers when they are battling with learners with special needs. Teachers also need to learn how to collaborate with parents and professionals to support learners.
Participant 7	Trainers can make teachers aware that we've got different children in the classroom so the teacher can help the children to cope, for example in our class we've got children speaking different languages and we do different things to help children, for example we ask parents to explain schoolwork to children in their language.
Participant 8	Workshops should be conducted regularly, especially to provide support for new teachers. All Grade R teachers in the district should be trained so all are able to cope and maintain high standards of teaching. Departmental officials should visit schools regularly to identify challenges and plan workshops and training based on the needs and challenges of teachers.
Participant 9	Workshops are needed. Teachers should be given specific training to deal with learning

	challenges. Remedial teachers could help other teachers by sharing their knowledge with them.
Participant 10	I think the Department and universities should work together to offer courses for remedial teaching. Training must be practical, so teachers can understand the situation in the classroom.
Participant 11	Teachers need more training to recognise learner challenges early, so learners can be given support early.

Question 7: Do you have any closing thoughts you would like to share on this topic?	
Participant	Participant response
Participant 1	Teachers should have a humble and passionate approach and not be harsh with learners. The environment must be inclusive, learners can learn better if they have big space for learning, where they feel free to move. All learners should be accommodated, even those who are shy.
Participant 2	Grahamstown needs a well-resourced centre for people with special needs. I want to recommend that you start a centre in Grahamstown where people with special needs can go so they can get proper training and learn skills.
Participant 3	I am a professional and want to be recognised as a professional who is able to change and adapt teaching methods and strategies to meet the needs of my learners.
Participant 4	No
Participant 5	The environment has a big influence on a child's learning; children need clean and safe learning environments to learn, for example safe playgrounds and clean toilets. A playground is an important learning environment for children.
Participant 6	Grade R teachers have many challenges in the classroom, for example overcrowding, but they are not getting sufficient pre-service and in-service training and support to cope with these challenges.
Participant 7	We need resources when we are trained as teachers, but some schools do not have resources, like posters to teach numbers and counting. Teaching must be practical, for example teachers must bring fruit when they do a lesson about fruit.
Participant 8	No

Participant 9	We have a teacher with a physical disability at school. He walks with special shoes and finds it difficult to climb the stairs. The school helps him by allocating a downstairs classroom to him.
Participant 10	No
Participant 11	Teachers are sometimes too fast; they must be patient and not rush when they teach. Grouping is important because learners learn well when they learn together, and slower learners can learn from faster learners.

APPENDIX I

Observation schedule for Grade R classrooms

Title: In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R

26 June 2017

I am Nathan Ferreira, a PhD candidate with the University of South Africa. My topic, as stated above, focuses on Grade R teacher preparation for inclusive education. It is expected that the study would yield findings that could contribute to policy, practice and research on Grade R in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. I intend on using the findings to propose a model of Grade R in-service teacher preparation that could improve the situation and conditions for Grade R teachers so they can cope better with the challenges of inclusive education.

I kindly wish to do observations that relate to this study in your classroom. No foreseeable risks are associated with this activity as it serves research purposes only and will remain confidential. The observations will be conducted once or twice during the month from 14 August 2017 to 15 September 2017. I will be a non-participant observer and make arrangements with you beforehand so observations can be brief and unobtrusive, without interrupting the school programme. Your participation is voluntary, and your anonymity will be ensured. You have the right to withdraw from the study without penalty at any stage. The data will be available to you during the data collection process, so you can verify that everything is truthful. After completion of the study, an electronic summary of the findings of the study will be made available to you on request.

Permission to undertake this study has been granted by the Eastern Cape Department of Education and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. If you have any research-related enquiries, they can be addressed directly to me or my supervisor. My contact details are: 0737938335, e-mail: 49047582@mylife.unisa.ac.za, and my supervisor can be reached at 0124812756, Department of Inclusive Education, College of Education, UNISA, e-mail: mahlofd@unisa.ac.za.

Thank you.

Observation template

TOPIC: In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R

RESEARCHER: Nathan Ferreira

SUPERVISOR: Prof. F. D. Mahlo

Partici pant	School	Date and Time	Items to Observe	Observations	Reflection
			<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The availability of teaching resources, for example educational toys and books that are used to provide learning for learners with diverse learning needs.2. The way teaching resources are applied to provide learning to learners with diverse learning needs.3. The verbal interaction between Grade R teachers and learners with diverse learning needs, for example when they explain work during lessons.4. The non-verbal interaction between Grade R teachers and learners with diverse learning needs, for example the way they use non verbal mean to involve withdrawn learners in lessons.		

APPENDIX J

TRANSCRIBED OBSERVATION DATA

Item 1: The availability of teaching resources, for example educational toys and books that are used to provide learning for learners with diverse learning needs.		
Participant	Observation	Reflection
Participant 1	Resources include paints, brushes, DOE workbooks, crayons, hoola hoops, etc. Class has 10 tables with four chairs per table.	Class is well resourced, and everything is well organised.
Participant 2	Resources include crayons, paints, brushes, posters, birthday chart, aprons, hoola hoops, etc.	Resources appear to be relevant and sufficient in number. The various resources can be used well to teach diverse learners with diverse challenges or learning styles. Some resources, like hoola hoops can even be used to provide learning outside the classroom.
Participant 3	Resources include books, charts, puzzles, clay, abacus, old computer, lego blocks, etc. Class has 5 tables with 8 chairs per table.	Classroom is over-crowded; teacher has difficulty giving individual attention. Teacher goes from table to table to interact with learners. Mostly learners interact among themselves in unstructured, informal interaction when teacher is at a different table.
Participant 4	Resources include DOE workbooks, crayons, balls, blocks, charts, colouring pages, old phone, and old computer. Classroom is a spacious prefab building. Four tables are set up with 5 learners per table.	Extreme winter and summer weather can cause discomfort in the prefab classroom. Crayons are put in one container per table – this is a good lesson in sharing for the learners, and learners work together very well.
Participant 5	Resources include DoE workbooks, crayons, charts, blocks, hoola hoops, plastic fruit, sea shells	The class is spacious and well-resourced. Learners have lots of visual stimulation and a nice play area in the class.
Participant 6	Resources include a piano, tv and dvd player, building blocks, clothes, helmets, puzzles, etc.	The class is very well resourced and teacher provides a stimulating learning environment for the 36 learners, for example, the clothes and helmets are ideal for role play and lessons on careers.
Participant 7	Participant 7 assists Participant 6 and they share a classroom and teach together with the same resources.	The reflection for Participant 7 is the same as for Participant 6

Participant 8	Resources include DOE workbooks, crayons, paints, brushes, hoola hoops, toys (balls), etc. The classroom is also big and well-ventilated, 6 tables are used with 5 or 6 learners per table.	Good resources are available, even to teach diverse learners with diverse needs. Resources like the balls and hoola hoops are ideal for physical activities.
Participant 9	Resources include charts, a felt board with material pictures and words, DOE workbooks, blocks, tennis rackets, etc. Learners are divided in 5 groups with 8 learners per group. 4 Groups sit by tables and 1 group does activities on the mat.	There are not enough resources for all learners. The teacher makes full use of the available resources to involve all learners in the lesson and make the lesson exciting. Learners participate very eagerly.
Participant 10	Resources include charts, a felt board with material pictures and words, paint, brushes, crayons, DOE workbooks, etc.	The resources are not enough for the 40 learners. The teacher is able to improvise and use limited resources to teach the lesson.
Participant 11	Resources include a felt board with material pictures and numbers, a flipchart, DOE workbooks, crayons, paints, brushes, blocks, etc.	The teacher has good resources, but there is not enough for the 40 learners in her class.

Item 2: The way teaching resources are applied to provide learning to learners with diverse learning needs.

Participant	Observation	Reflection
Participant 1	Learners were doing writing and colouring activity, and verbally interacting with teacher. They present their books to teacher at the table and read magazines after teacher checked their books individually.	All learners are actively participating in the lesson; peer learning at the tables helps a lot because there are too many learners for long one-on-one interaction between teacher and learners. Class is a bit noisy.
Participant 2	Teacher and learners are isiXhosa speakers. Teacher guides the learners with their cutting and drawing activities by explaining what is required and demonstrating with examples.	Communication and understanding is good because the teacher and the learners are Xhosa speakers and the learners are well disciplined. The class is not too noisy, and teacher is able to pay attention and interact with withdrawn learners. Peer interaction and peer learning is also good.
Participant 3	5 Different activities are run at 5 different tables at the same time. All learners are actively participating in learning activities using puzzles, dough, etc. Teacher goes from table to table, spends 5 minutes at each table.	Teacher is able to give individual attention at one table at a time, but then the other tables are rowdy.
Participant 4	Teacher uses various resources, e.g. colouring pages, crayons and scissors.	All the learners are able to use the resources and partake in the lesson. There are no apparent

		diversity and special needs among learners.
Participant 5	Teacher uses charts and other resources, including plastic fruit for visual stimulation to make lesson interesting and relevant.	There are no obvious diversity and special needs among learners, and they are able to follow the lesson and teachers instructions well. Discipline is also very good.
Participant 6	Teacher uses various resources in one lesson, for example books, colouring pages, crayons scissors, glue	All learners are able to participate in the lesson because the resources are exciting. Teacher is experienced and skilful.
Participant 7	Participant 7 and Participant use the same resources because Participant 7 is Participant 6's assistant teacher.	Participant 7 is an experienced and skilled teacher and uses well to guide learners in their learning.
Participant 8	Teacher uses big beautiful charts during lessons, for example to explain the body and body parts. Different activities are also taking place at each tables, learners share resources at a table and interact well with one another.	Teacher moves around a lot from table to table to encourage learners and give one on one attention to them and demonstrate activities to them. There are no obvious barriers among learners.
Participant 9	Teacher speaks a lot, but uses the felt board and charts to provide visual stimulation. Learners also interact with the felt board by putting correct pictures by correct numbers.	The lesson is effective and learners enjoy the lesson.
Participant 10	Teacher mostly uses felt board and blackboard.	The teacher uses mostly traditional teaching methods, for example blackboard that do not require many resources because she has limited resources.
Participant 11	Teacher uses all the resources, but she mostly uses the felt board.	All learners are familiar with the resources and interact well with the resources.

Item 3: The verbal interaction between Grade R teachers and learners with diverse learning needs

Participant	Observation	Reflection
Participant 1	Teacher and learners are isiXhosa speakers. Teacher speaks a lot to get the learners to behave and be quiet.	Teacher and learners are able to communicate well and with understanding because all are Xhosa speakers. The overcrowded classroom means, however, that there is more noise than constructive speaking in class. A teaching assistant or a smaller number of learners would improve the situation.
Participant 2	Teacher speaks very calmly to learners, which has a calming effect on	There appear to be no obvious learning barriers in class, all

	the learners. Verbal interaction is in isiXhosa.	learners are able to follow teacher.
Participant 3	Verbal interaction is mostly in English, with some isiXhosa and Afrikaans at times. The class is of mix language, with the vast majority being isiXhosa speakers and the rest are Afrikaans speakers.	Teacher gives individual attention and addresses learners by their names even though time is limited and there is such a large number of learners. Teacher and learner interaction is very limited.
Participant 4	Teacher speaks calmly and softly with learners and goes from table to table to interact with individual learners. The teacher speaks Afrikaans and all learners are able to respond in Afrikaans.	Learners respond well to the teacher, and the atmosphere in class is calm and productive. This atmosphere is good because this age group is normally very noisy and find it difficult to focus. Teacher is able to give individual attention because the learner total is only 20.
Participant 5	There is lots of verbal interaction between teacher and learners. Teacher skilfully identifies withdrawn learners and draws them into the lesson by probing them subtly for responses.	Learners listen to teacher and follow her instructions well. They also look at each other and listen to each other when they are stuck, this is good peer learning.
Participant 6	Teacher uses clear English language to speak to learners. The teacher assistant assists by explaining in isiXhosa as required by some learners who are isiXhosa speakers. Teacher does a good storytelling activity and uses good narrative and dramatic effect to tell the story.	Children are free to express themselves verbally and interact well with teacher. Peer interaction and peer learning is also very good during activities.
Participant 7	English is the medium at the school. Most learners speak isiXhosa and the teacher speaks isiXhosa as needed to clarify understanding for the learners.	Participant 7 and Participant 6 are co-teachers and they interact well with each other and with the learners. Learners who are not too comfortable to speak English rely a lot on Participant 7 to explain to them in isiXhosa.
Participant 8	Teaching is done in Afrikaans, and teacher uses lots of repetition for example when identifying numbers. Learners also clap their hands to show a number value.	Learners follow instructions relatively well. Peer learning and group work is also effective.
Participant 9	Teacher and learners are isiXhosa speakers and the medium in class is isiXhosa. Most of the learning takes place through verbal interaction between teacher and learners.	There is lots of verbal interaction, which makes learning loud and noisy at times, for example when learners repeat after teacher.
Participant 10	Teacher and learners are isiXhosa speakers. Teacher uses lots of verbal interaction, up to 95% isiXhosa and approximately 5 % English.	Learners understand teacher well and respond well with loud verbal responses.

Participant 11	Teacher and learners are isiXhosa speakers. Teacher speaks a lot and learners respond with loud verbal responses.	A lot of verbal learning takes place, which means the class is loud and noisy at times.

Item 4: The non-verbal interaction between Grade R teachers and learners with diverse learning needs, for example the way they use non-verbal means to communicate with withdrawn learners or learners who are unable to speak.

Participant	Observation	Reflection
Participant 1	Teacher moves continuously from table to table to restore order in the class and help learners with activities. All learners participate in the non-verbal activities like drawing and colouring. Body movements and singing are used to point out body parts.	There appear to be no learners with barriers to learning in class, some appear withdrawn and others are hyperactive. Teacher effectively uses activities, like singing and body movements, to make learning fun and to involve all learners.
Participant 2	Teacher moves around a lot interacting and assisting learners. She assists by showing them how to use crayons and grip scissors.	Teacher allows time for constructive peer interaction and learning, she allows them space to learn on their own.
Participant 3	Teacher identifies the challenges that individual learners have with activities and help them physically with activities, e.g. building puzzles.	Teacher manages class well under the circumstances and peer learning helps a lot, but there is lots of noise. Learner numbers are too high, a teacher aide or reduced learner numbers would help.
Participant 4	Teacher uses pictures and verbal interaction to teach the learners, together with colouring, cutting and pasting activities. They also go outside the class for exercise and movement.	All learners partake in the lesson. There isn't much peer learning because teacher is able to go from table to table easily to give individual attention to learners. It would perhaps be good to use more peer learning because it has many benefits. Learning outside the class is also good because children enjoy learning outside.
Participant 5	Teacher points holds up plastic fruit when naming them. Learners identify fruit on page and colour it. They also cut and paste fruit. Teacher also takes them outside the classroom for song and movement.	All learners are excited and participate actively in the lessons.
Participant 6	Teacher encourages and praises learners a lot, and assists withdrawn and quiet learners with activities until they are able to manage on their own.	There are no obvious physical or other barriers that prevent learners from participating in the activities. All learners are active participants in the lessons.

	Teacher also uses movement and clapping hands during lesson.	
Participant 7	Teacher moves around a lot and assists learners with activities, for example cutting, until they are able to cope on their own.	There are benefits to having 2 teachers working together in one class: they complement each other and are able to move around the class well to identify challenges, for examples learners who are quiet or do not participate in the lesson. They provide good support to learners.
Participant 8	Teacher is aware of non verbal techniques and uses it well, for example to clap the number values. Teacher also incorporates dance and movement in the lessons.	Non-verbal interaction is effective to ensure learners understand the lesson. Slower learners benefit especially from interaction with teacher.
Participant 9	Teacher uses non verbal means as well during lessons, for example by using hands to point out numbers and clapping hands for correct answer.	Learners enjoy the interaction with teacher and follow her closely when she explains to them.
Participant 10	Teacher uses different strategies to involve withdrawn learners, for example by giving them tasks like collecting books and helping teacher.	All learners are part of the lesson. Despite the challenges, like limited resources and overcrowded classroom, the discipline is very good and the learners respect teacher.
Participant 11	Teacher goes to tables to demonstrate activities to learners and help in various ways, for example by showing how to grip crayons when colouring.	There are no obvious barriers in class and learners learn well with the methods that teacher is using.

APPENDIX K

Template for document analysis of lesson plans?

Aim of doing this doc analysis: Help answer the research questions, specifically research question 2. The assumption here is that a lack of inclusive strategies in lesson plans show lack of teacher knowledge, which could point to challenges in teacher preparation. The content of the lesson plan will show how the teacher plans to include learners with diverse needs in the teaching and learning process. Example of diversity: 7 different learning styles, also language differences, also different intellectual abilities

1. Does teacher have a lesson plan?
2. What are the sections of the lesson plan? Look for main 4: Outcomes, Activities, Resources, Assessments
3. Is it a one size fit all lesson plan? Can one lesson plan accommodate all learners? Correlate this information with what I observe in class. What diversity exists in class? Do all learners have visual or language abilities to participate in lesson? Do they all speak with teacher, do they show speech difficulties, and do they hold the book close to their face when they read?
4. What plans does teacher have to include all learners? Does the lesson plan show an adapted curriculum with multiple outcomes, activities, resources, assessments? Look for different resources that are used to accommodate diversity, eg pictures for visual learners, oral feedback from learners with writing difficulties.

APPENDIX L

TRANSCRIBED DATA OBTAINED FROM DOCUMENT ANALYSIS OF LESSON PLANS

Question 1: Does the teacher have a lesson plan?		
Participant	Observation	Reflection
Participant 1	Yes. The teacher has 2 lesson plans: the first one is the generic DOE lesson plan for grade R teachers and the second one is handwritten one that the teacher designed.	The teacher uses the DOE lesson plan as a guide and framework, but she effectively designed her own lesson plan that she adapted to suit her needs and that of her learners. By using 2 lesson plans the teacher shows her efforts to accommodate learners with diverse needs.
Participant 2	Yes. Participant 2 has lesson plans similar to that of her colleague-Participant 1.	The similar lesson plans are good because it shows good collaboration between colleagues and uniformity of direction. Similar lesson plans can also prove ineffective if the learners in the 2 classes are diverse and need different teaching strategies. By using 2 lesson plans the teacher shows her efforts to accommodate learners with diverse needs.
Participant 3	Yes. The teacher uses 2 lesson plans to accommodate different learners. Her main lesson plan is the DOE one for Grade R. The other one is a teacher guide that was designed by GROW Learning Company.	Using different lesson plans shows teacher's efforts to address learner diversity and accommodate all learners.
Participant 4	Participant 4 and Participant 5 use the same lesson plans.	The notes for Participant 4 and Participant 5 are the same.
Participant 5	Yes. The teacher uses the lesson plan of the DOE as well as one that she designed to accommodate the levels of learning and learner diversity in her class. I read her daily and weekly lesson plans.	The teacher uses an adapted lesson plan together with the DOE lesson plan. This shows her awareness of diverse learner needs and her attempts to accommodate diverse learners.
Participant 6	Yes. I read an updated weekly lesson plan.	The teacher is well organised and her lesson plan is up to date. The lesson plan is realistic and shows planning for lessons that are on the level of the learners.
Participant 7	Participant 7 and Participant 6 are co-teachers and have the same lesson plan.	Similar to Participant 6.
Participant 8	Yes. I saw the teacher's daily plan.	The lesson plan is used as a guide in the teaching process.

Participant 9	Yes. I saw the daily and weekly plans. The teacher has a plan for each subject, but the sections are not clear.	Lesson plan does not give clear guidance to the teacher to include diverse learners.
Participant 10	Yes. The teacher has a well-designed lesson plan based on the lesson plan of the DOE.	The teacher is well organised with a well designed lesson plan. The lesson plan doesn't show time frames though.
Participant 11	Yes. I saw a daily and weekly lesson plan. The teacher has a lesson plan for each subject.	The lesson plan is not detailed.

Question 2: What are the sections of the lesson plan? Look for Outcomes, Activities, Resources, and Assessments?

Participant	Observation	Reflection
Participant 1	The lesson plans contain various sections, topics, themes and resources are clear, but no assessments are shown. Methods are given as well and there is a lot of focus on activities. The lesson plan indicates subjects: Maths, isiXhosa and Life skills, Creative activities, Morning ring, Outdoor play, and Indoor play. Outcomes are not given.	I think the assessments are in the teacher's assessment file. Outcomes are needed to direct the lesson and guide the teacher towards an end goal.
Participant 2	The lesson plans contain various sections, topics, themes and resources are clear, but no assessments are shown. Methods are given as well and there is a lot of focus on activities. The lesson plan indicates subjects: Maths, isiXhosa and Life skills, Creative activities, Morning ring, Outdoor play, and Indoor play. Outcomes are not given.	The lesson plan can be effective, because there are no obvious diversities among learners. Assessment should be indicated in lesson plans with outcomes to give direction to the teaching process.
Participant 3	The lesson plans show: Content areas, Topics, Activity, Resources, and Equipment.	Assessment should be indicated in lesson plans with outcomes to give direction to the teaching process.
Participant 4	Similar to notes for Participant 5	Similar to notes for Participant 5
Participant 5	The lesson plans have all the main sections: Outcomes, Activities, Resources, and Assessments.	The lesson plans are well designed and the planning is clear.
Participant 6	Lesson plan does not show detailed sections. Daily activities are clear.	The "what" of the lesson is clear, but the "how" is not clear. More detail is needed for resources and assessments to give direction and guide the teacher.
Participant 7	See Participant 6.	See Participant 6.

Participant 8	The lesson plan focuses mostly on activities. There are no clear Outcomes, Resources and Assessments.	The teacher has definite outcomes and the lessons are structured according to the outcomes, but this should be clearly shown in the lesson plan.
Participant 9	There are no Outcomes, Resources and Assessment.	The lesson plan focuses a lot on activities, but the other sections are needed so the teacher can have direction, e.g. in terms of what she wants to achieve and how she wants to achieve it with time frames.
Participant 10	The lesson plan contains all sections, except the Assessments.	Information about assessment is recorded in the assessments file.
Participant 11	The lesson plan focuses on Activities and resources.	The Outcomes and Assessments are not clearly indicated in the lesson plan.

Question 3: Is it a “one size fits all” lesson plan? What diversities are present among learners? Do all learners have visual or language abilities to participate in class? Do they all speak to the teacher? Do some hold their book close to their face to read?

Participant	Observation	Reflection
Participant 1	It is a one size fits all lesson plan. There are no obvious plans to include learners with diverse learning needs.	There are no apparent diversities among the learners. Learners are learning well and interacting well with the teacher, and the lesson plans appear to be effective.
Participant 2	It is a one size fits all plan with no planning for diversity.	Lesson plans can be effective, because learners show no obvious diversity.
Participant 3	It is a one size fits all lesson plan which does not show obvious strategies to include learners with diverse learner needs, for example slower and faster learners.	There are no obvious differences among learners apart from language differences.
Participant 4	Similar to notes for Participant 5.	Similar to notes for Participant 5.
Participant 5	Yes. The lesson plan is good and has all relevant sections, but there are no clear strategies for diversity, e.g. how to teach slower learners.	All learners are able to follow the lesson, because there are no obvious learner diversities in class. Teacher uses effective strategies to involve all learners, e.g. through peer learning.
Participant 6	Yes. The lesson plan does not clearly show planning for diversity, for example how to address challenges of learners learning at a different pace, or planning for language diversity.	The teacher is teaching well and all learners are actively participating in the lesson. The teacher uses good strategies to make the lesson understandable for all learners, e.g. she and her co-teacher use English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa to accommodate

		language diversity. This is, however, not indicated in the lesson plan.
Participant 7	See Participant 6.	See Participant 6.
Participant 8	Yes. It is a one size fits all lesson plan which shows no planning for diversity, e.g. learners learning at different pace.	The teacher adapts her lesson to accommodate learner diversity and uses resources to this effect; this should be explicitly shown in the lesson plan to guide the teacher during the lesson.
Participant 9	Yes, it's a one size fits all plan.	The learners appear to have different levels of understanding; some are withdrawn and learn at different paces. The teacher is experienced and skilful as a teacher, but the lesson plan should be designed and show adaptation to include diverse learners with diverse learning needs, so she can have direction and guidance during the lesson.
Participant 10	No. The lesson plan is detailed enough and shows strategies to accommodate learners with diverse learning needs.	The teacher uses good strategies according to the lesson plan to ensure that all learners are actively participating in the lesson. The lesson also progresses well because there appear to be no learners with diverse learning needs, e.g. language differences.
Participant 11	Yes, it's a one size fits all plan.	This lesson plan could be effective because there appear to be no learner diversities in the class, e.g. language diversity, secondly the teacher is experienced and skilful to adapt the lesson plan as the need arises during the lesson.

Question 4: What plans does the teacher have to include all learners? Does the lesson plan show an adapted curriculum with multiple outcomes, activities, resources, assessments? How are resources or teaching method applied to accommodate diversity, e.g. using pictures for visual learner, voice/oral feedback from learners who find it difficult to write?

Participant	Observation	Reflection
Participant 1	The lesson plan is not adapted to address diversity among learners.	The teacher adapts her teaching as the need arises in class, for example by using more repetition and examples with some learners. She uses available resources well in this process.

Participant 2	The lesson plan does not give clear direction about resources, etc. that should be used for diversity.	The teacher is experienced and adapts her lesson plan as the need arises during her teaching; she also uses her resources effectively. She plans well and organises her resources a day before the lesson. Her activities are also varied to include diverse learner needs, e.g. she uses movement, indoor activities and outdoor activities.
Participant 3	The teacher has no strategies for learner diversity in her lesson plans. The teacher adapts the lesson plan as the need arises.	Teacher is experienced and uses various strategies to include all learners, for example by code switching she involves learners who speak different language. She also uses singing and movement effectively. A well designed lesson plan that includes all learner diversities would help the teacher to keep the lesson flowing uninterruptedly even though her class is overcrowded.
Participant 4	Similar to notes for Participant 5.	Similar to notes for participant 5.
Participant 5	The lesson plan does not show concrete plans to accommodate learner diversity, but the lesson goes well because the teacher skilfully uses the lesson plan to guide her teaching and makes adjustments as the need arises.	The teacher is experienced and uses various teaching strategies to make lesson appealing to all learners with different learning styles, even withdrawn learners become part of the lesson. Teacher collaboration and continuous consultation between grade R teachers also work very effectively.
Participant 6	The lesson plan does not explicitly show adaptation for diverse learner needs.	But teachers are experienced and adapt the lesson plan as the need arises. Resources are also fully utilised for this purpose. Perhaps it's good that the lesson plan is just a guide and not too rigid or prescriptive to the effect that it limits teachers.
Participant 7	See Participant 6.	See Participant 6.
Participant 8	There are no obvious plans in the lesson plan to include learners with diverse learning needs.	The teacher is skilful at accommodating diverse learners, she uses different teaching strategies and resources to this effect. These strategies and adaptations should, however, be included in the lesson plan to guide the teacher and give direction to the lesson.

Participant 9	The teacher is doing a good job at adapting the lesson plan as the need arises and makes good use of resources to accommodate all the learners with their diverse learning needs. This is, however, not shown in the lesson plan.	A well-designed lesson plan would help the teacher a lot, especially when one considers that she has an overcrowded class.
Participant 10	The lesson plan is detailed and guides the teacher, e.g. by showing which activities and resources are needed.	The teacher is experienced and uses lesson planning effectively to make her lesson flow smoothly.
Participant 11	Teacher uses various resources to include all learners in the learning process, e.g. charts, paper, crayons.	Teacher uses visually stimulating resources and other resources well to stimulate learning. This should, however, be indicated in detail in the lesson plan.

APPENDIX M

EXAMPLES OF PATTERNS IN THE DATA

The following patterns were identified in the initial analysis:

Key:

T1 to T11: Interview response from Teachers 1 to 11

O1 to O11: Observation 1 to 11

GD1(5) to GD5(54): Government document 1(page5) to 5(page 54)

LP1 to LP11: Lesson plan 1 to 11

Theme 1: Inadequate Grade R in-service teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education

GD1(5): “The norms and standards for teacher education will be revised where appropriate to include the development of competencies to recognise and address barriers to learning and to accommodate the diverse range of learning needs”	Government documents promote inclusive education.
GD2(6): “The Diploma in Grade R Practices is the proposed initial qualification for this sector. All new entrants to the sector without prior ECD qualifications would need to enroll for this qualification.”	Government regulates Grade R teacher preparation programmes with training institutions.

Theme 2: Insufficient translation of theory into practice

T1: diverse learning needs “refers to learners who have special needs, for example some learners are slow learners and they need special attention”	Has experience of learner diversity
T2: “Learners are different, teachers need to love them and be patient and calm”	Has experience of learner diversity
tially sighted, another learner has a physical problem”	Has experience of learner diversity

Theme 3: Insufficient knowledge on the use of available resources

T1: "New teachers experience new challenges daily when they start teaching"	Teacher preparation programmes are not adequate. Not adequately prepared.
T2: "more training is needed because the situation is not okay"	Teacher preparation programmes are not adequate. Not adequately prepared.
T3: "it depends on which college or university they attend"	Teacher preparation programmes are not adequate. Not adequately prepared.
T4: "more training is needed, especially in special needs"	Teacher preparation programmes are not adequate. Not adequately prepared.

Theme 4: Infusion of curriculum differentiation in Grade R teacher preparation programmes for inclusive education

T1: "Teachers must go for training and workshops. They must learn different strategies to teach inside and outside the classroom, because some children love to play and learn outside. Teachers must be taught to make learning pleasant for learners. "	More workshops. Practical teaching strategies/skills.
T2: "The Department should make opportunities for us to get more information or go for training. Workshops should be conducted regularly, even weekly. The Department of Education should also provide bursaries for training. Teachers should be trained to use different strategies to teach learners with special needs, for example using music and games to teach."	Regular workshops. Practical teaching strategies/skills. DOE involvement.
T3: "Teachers need experience and the best way to learn to be a teacher is in the classroom. Teachers should meet with colleagues regularly and even work together so they can share their experiences. Training should allow teachers the freedom to find or develop methods that work for them, also to adapt their lesson plans to meet the needs of the learners."	Experience. Learn from experienced teachers. Teacher collaboration. Practical teaching strategies/skills.

APPENDIX N



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APPENDIX O

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that I have edited [Mr Nathan Ferreira's](#) thesis towards his Doctor of Philosophy degree with the University of South Africa (UNISA).

Thesis title: [In-service teacher preparation to implement inclusive education in Grade R](#)

The text as presented to me was well written. I consider that the amount of editing required was acceptably low.

SIRION ROBERTSON

APPENDIX P

CERTIFICATE FOR FORMATTING

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF FORMATTING

Date: 21 January 2019

This is to certify that formatting and layout has been carried out on the following thesis :
Doctor of Philosophy degree with the University of South Africa (UNISA) - Titled

IN-SERVICE TEACHER PREPARATION TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN GRADE R

By

NATHAN FERREIRA

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